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JOHN WESLEY'S AND RUDOLF BULTMANN'S
UNDERSTANDING OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH,
COMPARED AND CONTRASTED

Howe Octavius Thomas, Jr.

A thesis submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance
with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts.

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation compares and contrasts John Wesley's pre-critical, essentially Reformation theology of justification by faith interpreted from an Arminian-Calvinist perspective with Rudolf Bultmann's modern, Reformation theology of justification by faith interpreted from a historically critical, existential perspective. In the first section, the paper sets forth John Wesley's description of justification as "pardon and acceptance with God" procured by the atoning "merits of Jesus Christ".

Though the nuances shift over John Wesley's lifetime, justifying faith, which makes effectual in the believer Jesus Christ's saving death, was for him as for English Puritans an immediately perceptible, Divine, inner conviction given by the Holy Spirit of Christ's atoning love for "me". Justifying faith was dialectical in that it was both a Divine "gift" and a personal decision, both an instantaneous act as well as an unfolding development.

In the second section, the thesis sets forth Rudolf Bultmann's existential-ontological description of "justification" as "forensic-eschatological" which means the coming, decisive, eschatological judgment is viewed as already having taken place in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which delivers the believer from the "old age" with its "powers" of the sinful self-understanding and opens up to the believer the "new age" of authentic self-understanding. This "Righteousness" becomes a genuine "occurrence" and happening in one's existence when one "resolves" by faith to "obey" the Gospel proclamation which summons one to accept Jesus' event as God's saving deed which unveils to one a new self-understanding. "Faith", for Rudolf Bultmann, has both the character of "gift" and "decision", and, though a "state", is not an act performed once for all.

In the last section, both theologies are compared, contrasted, and evaluated. Taking into consideration that the two theologians are separated by nearly two centuries of thought, their fundamental differences, nonetheless, largely represent the clash of age-old, conflicting assumptions.

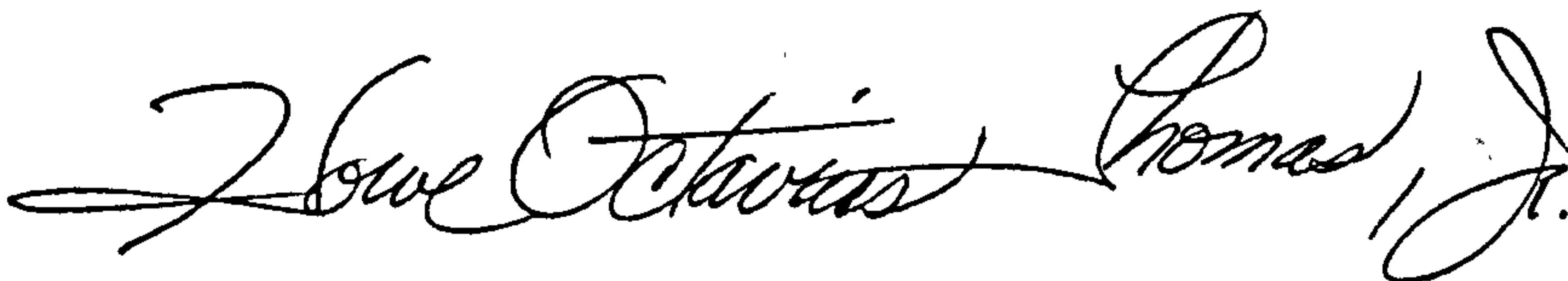
DEDICATION

To the B's, the S's, and the T's.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation, in its entirety, is the product of my own thought and effort. With sincere gratitude and appreciation, I acknowledge having received invaluable guidance from my supervisor, Professor John Kent, whose critical judgment and insight, expansive knowledge, and abiding willingness to be a continual help have assisted me throughout the research and writing of this thesis.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Howe Octavius Thomas, Jr." The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Howe" being particularly prominent.

Howe Octavius Thomas, Jr.

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SECTION ONE

JOHN WESLEY'S UNDERSTANDING OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

CHAPTER ONE

JUSTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION: THE PLACE AND IMPORTANCE OF JUSTIFICATION

What place *had* justification by faith in John Wesley's theological scheme? From 1738 onwards until his death in 1791, justification by faith was one of the two, overarching doctrines which he ranked above others. From his first discovery of this experiential reality in 1738 to his arrival at "the borders of the grave" fifty years later in 1790, he never ceased to proclaim it.¹ Unenlightened prior to 1738 to the doctrine of justification as it was construed in the classical Reformation tradition, he states that when he "had a clearer view than before of justification by faith...", he professed that wherever he preached, "salvation by faith was my only theme."²

Most frequently repeating justification's importance between the late 1750's and the latter 1760's, in 1765 he advised John Knox to adhere to the "two fundamental points, Justification by Faith and Holiness".³ In 1785 he referred to justification along with sanctification as the "two grand branches" of salvation.⁴ Indeed, John Wesley proclaimed justification and sanctification as the twin pillars of his theological scheme.⁵ He consistently placed justification by faith and sanctification side-by-side, speaking of them both in the same breath.⁶ Faith was the "gate" or "means" into love; that is, into the "room" or "end" of "heart religion". The "room" was also referred to as sanctification or sometimes "salvation".⁷ Though love deserved the greater honour and was more excellent than faith, justification by faith was immensely valuable and integral to salvation.⁸

The Scriptural proclamation "By grace ye are saved through faith" was so important that he foresaw that "whenever we give up this fundamental truth, the work of God by us will come to an end."⁹ Undoubtedly, the Church of

England's rotten main beams of "salvation by works" must be replaced by "the firm beam, salvation by faith".¹⁰ For being "justified by faith is the cornerstone of the whole Christian building," he declared.¹¹

In spite of these comments, did John Wesley consistently maintain justification's co-equal place with sanctification? Did he eventually allow the doctrine of holiness to eclipse that of justification? Calvinist Richard Hill accused him of contradicting his statement that the truth "The Lord our righteousness" (which he said was closely connected with the truth of "justification by faith") "is articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae [what Luther affirmed of justification], the pillar of that faith of which alone cometh salvation...". Moreover, the 1770 Methodist Conference Minutes were interpreted by strict Calvinists to exemplify John Wesley's deemed heretical theology of "works righteousness".¹²

John Wesley identified himself with Martin Luther and other Reformers in the high regard he had for justification by faith. He affirmed that "whether a man be justified by faith or works is a point of the last importance" because "our Reformers", being wise and good men, "could not have answered to God their spending much time upon it".¹³ When a disputant in 1761 claimed that the heirs of the Apostles (the Roman Catholics) anathematized the doctrine, John Wesley retorted that when the Council of Trent did this, for all intents and purposes the Council had anathematized the Apostle Paul.¹⁴

Nonetheless, as we shall see, John Wesley did not accord justification by faith supremacy over sanctification as did Martin Luther and Rudolf Bultmann like him, who viewed it as the "chief article" which acted as the hermeneutical principle of other doctrines.¹⁵ This fact - and John Wesley's stress on holiness - contributed to other evangelicals' suspicion of his commitment to justification by faith.

At various points in his life, he reaffirmed justification by faith and stated that he thought on it just as he had always done.¹⁶ For example, in the year before his death in 1790, some fifty-two years after Aldersgate, he reaffirmed

his long-standing position again.¹⁷

Nevertheless, justification's formal position and significance in relation to sanctification remained where it had been. He emphasized sanctification in the 1760's and the 1770's because he believed it necessary for the particular pastoral and religious needs of his societies at that particular time.¹⁸ Indeed, in 1762 he could rebuke the "fringe Methodist" Thomas Maxfield who in preaching his "brand of perfection" depreciated justification.¹⁹ John Fletcher, the vicar of Madeley and associate of John Wesley, viewed John Wesley's apparent shift toward stressing good works not as a shift in theology but as offering different people, or the same people at different times, contrary directions depending on their need at the time.²⁰

THE SCOPE OF SALVATION

John Wesley's 1765 sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation" represented perhaps his most comprehensive effort to gather up and systematize in one sermon the various constituents of genuine, Scriptural Religion into one cohesive scheme. For him, just two words encompassed the marrow of all Scripture: faith and salvation. Salvation (on other occasions, "love") was the end of genuine religion; faith was the means to the end.²¹ The salvation which preoccupied Paul's attention in Ephesians 2:8 and John Wesley's is that which is now present and is expressed by the text, "Ye are saved", or, equally, "Ye have been saved."²² However, viewed in its utmost extent, this salvation might be extended to include God's entire work, from "the first dawning of grace" (preventing grace") in the soul till it was consummated in glory.²³ In other words, the term "salvation" for John Wesley in its most comprehensive use might include the full spectrum of God's saving activity from "preventing grace" to salvation's consummation, or "final salvation". Nonetheless, "salvation" was typically viewed as "present" salvation and "final" salvation, this bifold distinction being already explicitly described as such by 1744.²⁴

In the first half of the Revival, salvation as "going to heaven" or the blessing on the other side of death ("final" salvation) was put aside while "present salvation" was center stage.²⁵ More attention came to be placed upon "final salvation" later, particularly in reference to the 1770 Minutes controversy.²⁶ "Present" salvation denoted what God did in this life; that is, He gave justification, sanctification, and "full salvation" (entire sanctification).²⁷ By 1744, the sweep of salvation, comprising both "present" and "final" salvation, was expressed in the three distinct, sequential, nodal operations of God which punctuated it: "pardon, holiness, and glory".²⁸ Salvation was viewed in terms of degrees of salvation.²⁹ He stated that as soon as one's justification was witnessed to him by the Holy Ghost, unless his faith was shipwrecked, "salvation gradually increases in his soul".³⁰ Indeed, "salvation" may be equated only with justification.³¹ In so doing, it most always was qualified by the term "faith" as in such typical expressions as "salvation by faith" or the even more common phrase "saved by faith".³² On the other hand, salvation could also be equated with either holiness or full sanctification.³³

Set within God's overarching schema for man's salvation, justification by faith is properly framed. Salvation was the preeminent conception in John Wesley. It comprehended both justification and sanctification which were equal constituent parts which must be held together in tension and equilibrium. Neither were to be allowed to belittle or to gain ascendancy over the other. Salvation was complemented by both together.³⁴

The equal overall position that John Wesley formally gave to justification and sanctification was looked upon not only as a guard against Martin Luther's (by extrapolation, Rudolf Bultmann's) errors, but also against the Council of Trent's error of totally confounding sanctification and justification together.³⁵ It is a constructive, mediate proposal which is reminiscent of the seventeenth century English Arminian-Calvinist Puritans.

THE DEFINITION OF JUSTIFICATION

In establishing his definition of justification, let us first canvass the brief terms and the phraseology he generally employed. In the earliest formal definition in his June, 1738, sermon, "Salvation by Faith", he defined justification as "a salvation from sin, and the consequences of sin", "deliverance from guilt and punishment", and "a deliverance from the whole body of sin".³⁶ In 1745, justification was similarly described as "a present deliverance (or salvation) from sin". In 1785, it signified "being saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God".³⁷

Early on in 1745 and 1746 the word "pardon" was viewed synonymously with justification.³⁸ This was reiterated in 1765.³⁹ One was justified when "God pardons and absolved him."⁴⁰ As early as the 1740's "pardon" was also paired with "acceptance" to form a duet which remained a favorite throughout his lifetime. The 1744 Minutes are illustrative of an early way of stating this pairing. To be justified was "to be pardoned, and received into God's favour".⁴¹ Equally in 1745, justification was described as "present pardon and acceptance with God".⁴² With slight variation, from then on this remained one of his most favourite definitions.⁴³ In 1756, he allowed that pardon and acceptance may be distinguished but could not be divided. In the very same moment that God forgave one's sins, one became His son and was accepted.⁴⁴

Therefore, the term "acceptance" was interchanged with "pardon" and used in its own right. Justification was referred to in 1745 as "the first acceptance or pardon", or "our first acceptance with God".⁴⁵

A synonym for justification as "pardon" was typically expressed as "the forgiveness of sins."⁴⁶ Like "pardon", the term "the forgiveness of sins" was coupled with what it necessarily implied, "acceptance with God". He declared, "It is the forgiveness of all our sins, and (what is necessarily implied therein) our acceptance with God".⁴⁷

Equivalent to the terms "pardon" and "the forgiveness of sins", "remission of sins" was another favorite expression which was found in both the

Scriptures and in the Homilies.⁴⁸ This may variously appear early on in the Awakening as "the present remission of our sins", or later on simply as "remission of sins".⁴⁹ Similar to "pardon" and "the forgiveness of sins, "remission of sins" may be interchanged with "our first acceptance with God".⁵⁰ The phrase "the remission of sins" may be further explained as "acquittal", the "non-imputation of sin", or that one's "sins are blotted out".⁵¹

In the early and middle years of the Awakening, justification may be said to mean that God "declares his righteousness' or mercy"⁵² by, or 'for the remission of the sins that are past'.⁵³ One was justified when "faith is" then "counted to him for righteousness".⁵⁴ While he would allow that to be justified was to be "accounted righteous before God" or to have "the righteousness of Christ imputed", these phrases in comparison to the others are used more sparingly and usually with an accompanying qualification of their meaning.⁵⁵ He was cautious in employing the term "the righteousness of Christ imputed" because the Calvinists to his mind had so maligned and twisted the expression that using it was given to misunderstanding.

Having set forth the most common summary phrases used generally through the range of his life to characterize justification, let us examine how these terms were more fully explicated. In his 1738 sermon "Salvation By Faith", he provided us with an early full-blown definition. He said justification implied in the largest sense "a deliverance from guilt and punishment, by the atonement of Christ actually applied to the soul of the sinner now believing on Him, and a deliverance from the whole body of sin, through Christ formed in his heart".⁵⁶ In a word, justification was salvation from sin.⁵⁷ It was the salvation foretold of Jesus who would "save his people from their sins".⁵⁸ All that believed in him he would save "from original and actual, past and present sin, of the flesh and of the spirit".⁵⁹ Whereas all were guilty before God, through the redemption in Jesus Christ there was now no condemnation to those who believed.⁶⁰

In his A Farther Appeal in 1745, he stated that justification meant "present forgiveness, pardon of sins, and consequently acceptance with God, who therein 'declares his righteousness' or mercy, by or 'for the remission of the sins that are past', saying, 'I will be merciful to thy unrighteousness, and thine iniquities I will remember no more'". The condition of this justification was faith.⁶¹

Moreover, being saved from guilt, the believer was saved also from the fear of punishment and the wrath of God. He need no longer regard God as a "severe master, but as an indulgent Father".⁶² Lastly, he was saved from the power of sin. Quoting 1 John 3:5,6, he cited "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." So that the believer sinned not by "habitual sin", for sin could not reign in the one who believed. Neither did he sin by "wilful sin", his will being set against all sin; nor, by "any sinful desire"; nor finally did he sin by infirmities.⁶³

In answer to the question of the 1744 Conference "What is it to be justified?", the Minutes recorded, "To be pardoned, and received into God's favour, into such a state, that if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved." The Minutes further stated, "Every one who believes, is justified."⁶⁴

In a letter to Thomas Church in 1746, he showed his agreement with Thomas Church on justification by appropriating Thomas Church's words. He agreed that "Justification is the act of God, pardoning our sins and receiving us again to His favour. This was free in Him, because undeserved by us; undeserved, because we had transgressed His law, and could not, nor even can now, perfectly fulfill it."⁶⁵ Therefore, we could not be justified by our works, or "an external show of religion", or "by any superstitious observances". To be so justified would be "to be justified by some merit of our own" and not by the life and death of our Lord who was "the sole meritorious cause of this mercy, which must be firmly believed and trusted in by us."⁶⁶ One's faith was the means and instrument whereby he embraced and received the promises of pardon through him.⁶⁷

The 1746 sermon "Justification by Faith" he recommended as a source for his sentiments at large on the subject of justification. In it he presented justification, as he believed the apostle Paul did in Romans, as "that act of God the Father whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he 'showeth forth his righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of the sins that are past'".⁶⁸ Citing Romans 4:7, 8, he stated that to the one justified or forgiven, God "will not impute sin" to his condemnation. On that account He will not condemn him either in this world or in the world to come. "His sins, all his past sins, in thought, word, and deed, 'are covered', are blotted out; shall not be remembered or mentioned against him, any more than if they had not been," said John Wesley.⁶⁹ Because God's Son had suffered for him, God would not inflict upon the sinner what he deserved to suffer. In a composite statement which appears to be his own expression he said, "And from the time we are 'accepted through the Beloved', 'reconciled to God through his blood, he loves and blesses and watches over us for good, even as if we had never sinned.'"⁷⁰

In the 1765 A Treatise on Justification: Extracted from Mr. John Goodwin, he declared that to justify "imports a sovereign Judge being the supreme Magistrate discharging a man from the guilt and punishment of those things whereof he is or might be justly accused; not because he is innocent of those things or justifiable according to the strictness of the law but because the Judge having sovereign power is willing, upon sufficient considerations, to remit the penalty of the Law and to discharge him as if he were innocent."⁷¹ God's justification of a sinner was an act whereby he freely forgave him all that he had done against the Law and acquitted him from all the punishment due to such offenses. He was acquitted not upon any consideration pleaded for him according to the Law, but upon the consideration of that done for him by Jesus Christ who made an atonement for the world to purge its sin. Faith was the condition which brought him to this justification purchased by Christ.⁷²

In the 1765 sermon The Scripture Way of Salvation, John Wesley gave a concise description of justification which, while saying nothing new but rehearsing past affirmations, is useful as a statement of the later Revival. He affirmed that it was

"the forgiveness of all our sins, and (what is necessarily implied therein) our acceptance with God. The price whereby this hath been procured for us (commonly termed the 'meritorious cause' of our justification) is the blood and righteousness of Christ, or ... all that Christ hath done and suffered for us till 'he poured out his soul for the transgressors.'"73

THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION

Having looked at a representative selection of his customary ways of explaining justification, we turn now to examine the constituent makeup of this description of justification. The backbone of the matter lay in what was considered to be the ground or cause of justification. Essentially, the ground was "the merits of Jesus Christ" or merely the same, "what Christ hath done and suffered for us."⁷⁴

The issue of justification's cause in the largest sense had not been made as simple as it might seem: both the Council of Trent and the Scholastically-minded Puritans had divided the 'cause' into numerous sub-causes. One can only conclude from a study of John Wesley that he was not interested in putting too fine a point on it. Perhaps it smacked too much of arid, subtle speculation which would go missing on his audience and even detract from the heart of the matter.⁷⁵

Nonetheless, without analytically attempting to bring attention to the distinction, he did distinguish several causes. The principal cause was "the ineffable love of God the Father". It was "of mere grace, of free love, of undeserved mercy, that God hath vouchsafed to sinful man any way of reconciliation with himself."⁷⁶ In 1738, "grace" was designated as "the source" of salvation while similarly in 1779, he affirmed that "the foundation of all real religion" was the truth "by grace we are saved through faith".⁷⁷ The "source" or cause was of course God Himself, but God Himself particularly

manifested in His free love and His grace, His unmerited and undeserved mercy. He himself through grace provided for man's best end by the best means.⁷⁸

Actually, John Wesley was in line with traditional statements which consciously categorized this cause. The cause which John Wesley referred to as "the grace of God" corresponded to the traditional designation of "efficient cause". The Council of Trent identified the "efficient cause" as the "merciful God" while Richard Baxter and John Goodwin identified it as simply "God". John Goodwin indicated the infinite love, the graciousness, and goodness of God as the "moral cause" while Richard Baxter described the "moral persuading cause" as the intercession of Christ.⁷⁹

Assuming the logical progression of the chain of causes, the "meritorious cause" was the next significant cause. John Wesley and others incessantly referred to it as the pillar and foundation of justification. The "meritorious cause" was the "free grace of God in Christ", or "the grace of God, through Jesus Christ thy Lord", or in John Wesley's recitation of the notable affirmation, "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself".⁸⁰

The "meritorious cause" was seen to be centred both in Jesus Christ Himself and, more specifically, in his life and sacrificial death. Prior to Aldersgate, John Wesley perceived Jesus Christ in similar manner as his "significant others", such as Thomas à Kempis and William Law. Judging from his The Christian Pattern, Thomas à Kempis was not drawn to Christ primarily as the one who satisfied God's justice, but as the martyr and example. In what Gustaf Aulén calls the "Devotion to the Passion" concept of atonement, Thomas à Kempis directed Christians to meditate upon and imitate Christ's whole life as a "cross" and as one of suffering.⁸¹

This was the image and work of Christ which John Wesley had adopted prior to the Spring of 1738. He accused William Law of directing him in his pre-Aldersgate days to "Christ our Pattern".⁸² He had not ignored Christ prior to Aldersgate but gazed upon him as the great suffering Exemplar. According

to the Christian Pattern, Jesus appeared to be a tragi-heroic figure who, having been through the suffering of this life and having triumphed over it, was now up ahead in the victor's circle. Christians, following in the rear, were called to struggle after his example. Personal union with Christ was the goal for which the Christian strove, having heroically and successfully denied himself and renounced the world.⁸³

Several observations ought to be made. In John Wesley's thought prior to Aldersgate, Christ as "satisfaction" in the Anselmian tradition is not explicitly in evidence. Instead, Christ is revered and followed as suffering martyr and Exemplar. Since grace was conceived in a Catholic fashion as gratia creata, a hybrid supernatural quality neither God himself nor nature, Christ himself was not believed to be given in bestowed grace. He was the transcendent ascended Christ. He was once removed from the viator. Personal union and communion with Christ was essentially an eschatological reward. For the Christian, everlasting life was yet to be gained. The perfect Christ, separated from the sinful Christian pilgrim by degrees of mortifications yet to be, was only vaguely and relatively near. From the high heavenly chambers, He the Example, behind the upper veiling-blur exhorted the wayfarer below and behind obediently to follow.

However, in the Spring of 1738, John Wesley's previous understanding of Jesus Christ was shattered and re-cast. Rather than conceiving of him as Example, he now claims to know him experientially as his own Saviour, the ground and cause of his justification and salvation, and of all religious endeavors. His dramatically changed experience and understanding of Jesus Christ manifested itself in his inquisition of William Law on May 20, 1738. "Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ? never, so as to ground anything upon 'faith in His blood'?" said he.⁸⁴ He took him to task for not laying Christ as his foundation; for recommending to him a book which spoke of "Christ our Pattern, but nothing express of Christ our Atonement".⁸⁵ John Wesley had now learned differently. "I build on Christ, the Rock of

Ages; on His sure mercies described in His Word," he wrote to Samuel, Jr. in October 1738.⁸⁶ The living Person Jesus Christ was the cause and ground of justification. He was "our Atonement", our propitiation. Only through Jesus, the Saviour, could all that man was to know of and receive from God -- including justification -- now be realized. The substance of "the gospel" and of the whole revelation made to men by Jesus Christ was summed up, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."⁸⁷ He, "the Saviour of sinners", was the foundation and the fountainhead of the panoptical spectrum of salvation, of every blessing, of love and mercy, of all knowledge, of everlasting life, of the best means and end of man. John Wesley declared, "Christ is all in all, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; that all life, love, strength are from Him alone, and all freely given to us through faith."⁸⁸

Parallel to Martin Luther's breakthrough, John Wesley had abandoned his previous understanding that though the grace of Christ was present, Christ Himself was absent. He now accepted that the everliving Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified, raised, and eternally alive Person the Son of God, the transcendent and immanent Lord who, once living on this earth with his apostles Peter and John, now continued to work his once-for-all wrought salvation in persons -- even in him -- in present history. Jesus Christ "our Atonement", the cause and benefactor of all grace, was Himself immediately and immanently before the sinner, waiting to set up his throne, to indwell and live within him.⁸⁹ John Wesley proclaimed to his audience, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who now standeth in the midst of us" who keeps "mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin" was now present to be known by the sinner.⁹⁰ Reconciliation and fellowship with Him was not simply an eschatological hope. It was present reality. He stood immediately before the individual sinner in the here and now, "even at the door", ready to give Himself. "He is nigh that justifieth; He is nigh that supplies all your wants!" he pleaded.⁹¹ The individual who believed in the Lamb of God as the One who takes away "thy sins" has God reigning in his

soul, has the Son reigning in his heart, is spoken to by the Holy Spirit, and experiences "the kingdom of heaven" opened in his soul. He, therefore, may declare before angels and men, "Everlasting life is won: Glory is on earth begun". "You may this hour enter thereinto." he invited his listeners.⁹² Through knowing Jesus Christ as the Lamb who takes away thy sins, a personal relationship commenced with the Three-Person God in which immediate access, union, and communion with Him was realized.

For Rudolf Bultmann the move from the concept of Christ as "pattern" to that of Christ as "our Atonement" had little significance, since both conceptions were derived from a false world-view and flew in the face of modern biblical research. To contrive such a false picture of Jesus did not take into account the great uncertainty regarding what sayings could and could not be attributed to Jesus of Nazareth; nor did it recognize that the ascriptions made of him were not to be taken as objective, analytical descriptions of him but expressions of the disciples' existential self-understanding of Jesus in faith.

Nevertheless, he and John Wesley both accepted that the death of Jesus was the ground of justification. However, Rudolf Bultmann would sharply repudiate John Wesley's further connection of the death of Jesus with the so-called living resurrected person Jesus Christ whose existence was believed to have continued on after death and from whose Person the efficacy of his cross was derived and now given by Him to believers. In other words, the cause of justification for Rudolf Bultmann could not be traced back further to the person Jesus Christ who was now believed to be alive and actually dispensing the efficacy of his death to persons in the present. For him, the cause of justification was focused in the actual proclaiming of the cross, not in the supernatural person Jesus.

If John Wesley thought of Jesus Christ the Saviour Himself as the "meritorious cause" of justification, he located the cause of justification and salvation specifically in Jesus' obedient life and atoning death comprehended

together as one "work".

The "meritorious cause" was Jesus Christ distinctively in his having fulfilled a perfectly obedient life and his having died on the cross. John Wesley's terminology representing this double edge, though varying slightly, was fairly epitomized in the following phrases which frequently recurred throughout the span of his evangelical career. He stated that the "sole cause" of the remission of our sins (justification) is "the merits of Christ"; the only cause of present and eternal justification is what "Christ hath done and suffered for us"; and "the blood and righteousness of Christ" are "the sole meritorious cause of our salvation".⁹³

The significance with which he regarded "the merits of Christ" may be judged from his unreserved affirmation (in Martin Luther's words) that Christ's meritorious work was the articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae. Moreover, it was certainly "the pillar and ground of that faith of which alone cometh salvation".⁹⁴ Stated another way, it was the object of true, justifying faith.⁹⁵ He allowed that one might be unclear or have doubts regarding the doctrine of justification by faith and yet still be saved as long as he trusted in the reality to which the doctrine referred: the merits of Christ.⁹⁶ Herein was the absolutely fundamental cause of salvation.

Therefore, the "merits of Christ" as the principal cause excluded everything else as "cause". For ten years he confessed he had been "(fundamentally) a Papist" because he had wrongly held that we were justified by good works or, put more decently as he said, by faith and good works.⁹⁷ Good works and sanctification were to be excluded as a cause because man had no merit of his own.⁹⁸ Not even faith was meritorious.⁹⁹ The justifying power of faith was suspended upon the will, the free grace and the pleasure of God. Only the faith which laid hold of Christ could justify.¹⁰⁰

JESUS' PROCUREMENT OF SALVATION EXPLAINED

Why were "the merits of Christ" considered to be the ground and "meritorious cause" of justification? How did the life and death of Jesus Christ procure justification and salvation? The answer, which lies in John Wesley's conception of the atonement, gave rise to his definitions of justification which we have surveyed: "present pardon and acceptance with God"; "the forgiveness of sins" or the "remission of sins"; and "the righteousness of Christ imputed". As we consider the atonement, we shall see that it is the controlling lynchpin for John Wesley which determines his definitions and understanding of justification.

One may not unfairly say that in the early eighteenth century Church of England the "orthodox" doctrine of the atonement as expressed in the "satisfaction" theory was not so much denied as it was ignored or relegated to the background.¹⁰¹ Perhaps the temper of many ministers was represented by Archbishop Tillotson who seemed a bit jaded with its particular over-use in seventeenth century argumentative divinity.¹⁰² In any case, the Methodists, whose preaching and testimony once again raised its profile, put Jesus Christ's atonement and "merits" at the centre and heart of their message. Curiously, John Wesley seems not to have published any single tract on this cardinal point.¹⁰³ His own largest thoughts on the subject were presented in his criticism of William Law's views on "justice" in 1755. However, they are only hurried affirmations with little defense leaving much to be desired for an adequate treatment.¹⁰⁴

The soteriological meaning which John Wesley thought the Scriptures assigned to the life and death of Jesus Christ encompassed Anselm's theory of "satisfaction" as developed and expressed in the Reformed tradition. More particularly, the Anselmian idea, based upon the Scriptures and the Roman Catholic sacrament of penance, in which Jesus' death was an acceptable reparation and compensation for man's sin of affronting God's majesty and violating His moral order, had been adopted and tailored to accommodate the

Reformed emphasis upon Jesus' enduring the suffering of the law's penalty in the place of humankind ("penal" theory).¹⁰⁵ Moreover, Osiander's distinction between the active and passive obedience of Christ which became characteristic of Reformed thought also impacted John Wesley's understanding of the nature of Christ's merits. The "satisfaction" and "penal" theories are the standard explanations in John Wesley though the "recapitulation" theory and the "ransom" theories are stated.

Let us more thoroughly delve into his explanations of how Jesus' life and death produced our justification. Perhaps his most complete exposition was taken from a seventeenth century Dutch work Eukleria by Anna Maria Van Schurman and included in his letter to William Law.¹⁰⁶ Herein, the idea of "satisfaction" was most pronounced. Man owes the perfect obedience of his whole life to his Creator. If God does not get this, man owes a punishment in proportion to his transgression. But satisfying the condition is impossible because man can only give impartial and imperfect obedience.¹⁰⁷ As the Treatise on Justification stated, even if man committed 10,000 good deeds these could never compensate for the immensity of even one sin against God.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, man needed a Mediator who could repair the immense wrong done to the Divine majesty and satisfy the Supreme Judge who pronounced the sentence of death against the transgressors. This Mediator must suffer in the place of His people and merit for them pardon, holiness, and glory.¹⁰⁹

From the same extract, Anna Van Schurman underscored Christ's role as bearer of humankind's penalty and punishment. As we noted, this "penal" view is equally represented throughout John Wesley's writings. Jesus was seen as the Lamb of God who bore the iniquities of the world on the cross. He was the One "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities."¹¹⁰ With ample allusions to Isaiah 53, Anna Van Schurman spoke of Jesus Christ as "bearing our griefs, or sins, and carrying our sorrows".¹¹¹ Humankind forsook God and was, therefore, liable to the highest punishment.

The Mediator interposed Himself between them and the just Judge. The incomprehensible love of God spared them rather than the Son. The accent was on God himself, becoming flesh and bearing our sins, showing His infinite love of divine justice, being obedient to death on the cross, and satisfying its utmost demand.¹¹² In arguing against William Law, he underscored the centrality of God's infinite justice to the doctrine of the atonement.¹¹³ God willed at the creation of man "to reward every one as his work should be" and to render to them accordingly either good or evil.¹¹⁴ "Wrath", a presupposition of being "just", was a passion (anthropomorphically speaking he affirmed) which corresponded to the disposition of justice like love corresponded to mercy.¹¹⁵ God had anger at sin and punished it both temporally and eternally.¹¹⁶ God's justice was manifested in punishing sin as his mercy was demonstrated in providing a universal remedy for man's sin.¹¹⁷

Strategic to John Wesley's understanding of the work of Christ was the conception of Jesus Christ as the propitiatory sacrifice, who suffered and took upon Himself man's penalty, thereby averting wrath.¹¹⁸ Christ was sent to be a propitiatory sacrifice, an offering once for all to bear our sins (I Peter 2:24) and to be made a curse (Galatians 3:13) in our place in order to deliver us from the law's curse. For without the shedding of His blood, there was no remission of sins.¹¹⁹ Moreover, he was a vicarious substitute for man, dying in his stead and receiving man's penalty for him.¹²⁰ Further, he suffered that we might be spared and may go free, unpunished and restored to His favour.¹²¹

In addition to the two recurring descriptions of the atonement, the "satisfaction" and "penal" images, John Wesley could employ what has been referred to as the "reversal of the sin of Adam" or the "recapitulation theory".¹²² This teaching associated first with Irenaeus was used in John Wesley's 1782 sermon "On the Fall of Man". The gist of the thought was that Adam brought evil, or disease upon his whole posterity through his sin. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, died for all who die as a result of the first Adam's

sin (I Corinthians 15:22). Though by Adam's offence came judgment, by the righteousness of the second Adam the free gift might come upon all "unto the justification of life."¹²³ This "justification of life" which is connected with the new birth leads us through the life of holiness to life eternal.¹²⁴ By Christ, the second Adam, we now gain "infinitely more than we have lost" under the first Adam.¹²⁵ Using a medical analogy, he viewed Christ as providing the remedy for all our guilt and disease, renewing us in His moral image. In Him, all natural evils changed their nature and turned to good.¹²⁶

Let us note several other features of John Wesley's understanding of the atonement which complete its portrait. One trait which distinguishes the Reformed expression of the satisfaction theory from previous expositions is its bifurcation of Christ's work into active and passive obedience.¹²⁷ This distinction entered into John Wesley's analysis of the atonement but we will reserve discussion of it under the heading "imputation of Christ".

From 1739, when he delivered the sermon "Free Grace" to the Bristol Newgate prisoners, until the end of his life, John Wesley championed, even against the opposing tide of fellow evangelists such as George Whitefield, the universal extent of Christ's redemption. He proclaimed, "Christ gave Himself a ransom for all."¹²⁸ He amassed a variety of biblical texts to support the claim that the "Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53) and "He took away the sins of the world" (John 5). He opposed the strict Calvinists who urged that God had elected and chosen in eternity before creation who would be saved and, therefore, for whom alone Christ would make satisfaction. He contended that the Scriptures asserted that Christ died for "the world" not for "believers", for the ungodly, not "the elect".¹²⁹ If some had not been bought at all, then they could not deny the Lord who bought them. Ergo, unbelief would not be a sin.¹³⁰

Of course, John Wesley's so-called "universalism", though it did earn him the occasional accusation of "Socinian", was not the universalism of his contemporary Dr. John Taylor of Norwich or of Karl Barth in the twentieth

century who affirmed that God saved all men, whether or not they knew it, whether or not they desired it.¹³¹ John Wesley adhered to a theoretical or "hypothetical" universalism in the vein of the seventeenth century Frenchman, Moses Amyraldus, and advanced by Richard Baxter and John Goodwin. Amyraldus stated that since God's eternal purpose was to save, Christ intended to die for all men to carry out His purpose. This meant offering salvation to all.¹³² However, like Amyraldus, John Wesley qualified this by saying that though God desired universal salvation it was conditional upon the individual believing. When John Wesley entertained the question of why all were not saved if Christ died for all, he retorted, "Because they believe not in the name...."¹³³ Ultimately, man - empowered by grace - may choose or refuse the salvation offered in Christ.

In affirming an unlimited offer of atonement, John Wesley, though not without precedents in Protestantism, differed from the concept of "limited atonement" which was implicit in Martin Luther and made explicit in John Calvin.¹³⁴ That Christ died for the whole world was also a point of agreement also between him and Count Zinzendorf.¹³⁵

Implicit in John Wesley's formulation of the work of Christ is both its subjective and objective nature. As has already been said, he accepted that Christ's work was as an act of God which was objective and accomplished "outside" of man in a particular place in Jerusalem at a particular time. It was also a subjective act in the sense that through the work of God's grace the faith given to the believer could lay hold on for himself in the present the objective work of Christ and His atoning benefits. He and His benefits, for example, justification and sanctification, which were inextricably bound to His objective accomplishments on the Cross were communicated everlastingly afresh to the individual in the present experience of his personal life. We will examine this subjective side in discussing the "faith" which appropriates the death of Christ.

Meanwhile, regarding the atonement's objective nature there is an interesting bridge between John Wesley and the generations of theologians which came after the eighteenth century. John Wesley was familiar with the "Socinian" thought which interpreted the atonement, as he put it, as an example rather than a ransom.¹³⁶ He summarized Faustus Socinus' teaching as holding that Christ's death was a demonstration of God's redeeming love rather than an act of redemption.¹³⁷ He was adverse to this "moral" theory which in the words of Socinus declared, "The whole of our redemption by Christ is a metaphor."¹³⁸ John Wesley eschewed this position because it did not treat the death of Christ as a literal objective event which actually and directly affected the way in which God related to his creatures. In other words, it was not treated as an event in time and space with a one-to-one corresponding relation to the supernatural God's disposition (toward his creatures).¹³⁹ For John Wesley, Jesus Christ's dying on the cross was an act purposed in God and outwardly performed by Him.¹⁴⁰ God gave the Son and in Christ's crucifixion is seen as offering Himself to do the best for man by providing salvation.¹⁴¹ In the well-relied upon text, he urged that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).¹⁴² This event of Jesus dying on "skull hill" in Jerusalem for all to see was a necessary occurrence in order that God, as well as the world, be reconciled. Jesus' death was necessarily connected with the offering of pardon and remission of sins, and, therefore, justification. That God was angry with man for his sin was axiomatic. God's anger must be appeased and His justice satisfied in order that forgiveness of sins could be granted to man. The death of His Son was that event which necessarily effected the offer of forgiveness and procured justification.¹⁴³

Indeed, John Wesley did not neglect the manward emphasis of Jesus' perfect obedience to the Law and His bearing the punishment for the sin as a sacrifice. However, by avoiding the preoccupation with the active obedience of Jesus and rejecting it as the sine qua non for atonement, he seemed to steer

clear of the strict Calvinist emphasis which Gustaf Aulén would argue concentrated on the human role rather than God's in effecting atonement.¹⁴⁴ So, for John Wesley, God was both the subject acting and the object receiving the action.

A point worth keeping in mind in our comparison of John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann is that John Wesley did already encounter the genre of approach to the atonement that came into ascendancy in nineteenth and twentieth century Protestant theology. William Law, for example, in his later writings was put off by the doctrine of Atonement because he could not "comprehend" it.¹⁴⁵ Further, John Wesley read Andrew Michael Ramsey's reference to "the deplorable ignorance of those who represent the expiatory sacrifice of Christ as destined to appease vindictive justice and avert divine vengeance".¹⁴⁶ John Wesley responded that his own deplorable ignorance was such that he verily believed that all who denied it denied the Lord who bought them.¹⁴⁷

One may say without overstatement that trend-setting Protestant theologies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were disinclined to locate justification in the so-called "objective" value of Christ's death as John Wesley did. In contrast, they gravitated toward the "subjective" influence it exerted upon man. They denied that the work of Christ effected a change in God and His relation to man but rather argued that it effected a change in man.

John Wesley's verdict on the Socinian doctrine of the atonement was that it turned Christ's redemption into "a mere metaphor".¹⁴⁸ Interestingly, Martin Kahler concluded after analyzing notable Aufklärung theologians Albrecht Ritschl's and Friedrich Schleiermacher's discussions of the work of Christ that they tended to reduce Christ to "a mere symbol of the grace of God, without having any essential connection with that grace".¹⁴⁹ Presupposing a criticism of the traditional theory's moral, supernatural linkage of man's sin and guilt with the necessity of Christ's death for reconciliation with God, the view of Christ death as "mere metaphor" which John Wesley had encountered

gathered force in the following centuries.¹⁵⁰

Rudolf Bultmann did not render a systematic critique of the Reformed theory of the atonement. Though Rudolf Bultmann repudiated Albrecht Ritschl's rejection of man's bondage in original sin, he did not identify original sin with man's effrontery of a personal God. He would probably not disagree with the broad assumptions of Albrecht Ritschl's criticism of the satisfaction theory. Albrecht Ritschl argued that satisfaction theorists made grace subservient to law in arguing that Christ opened the door of grace only by fulfilling the justice of God.¹⁵¹ In contrast, his view was based on an understanding that when the law conflicted with the people's best moral interests, the head of state may waive the law in order to pardon a guilty individual and serve his best moral interests.¹⁵² However, John Wesley, apt to quote Augustine's remark that if he could save a million people eternally by a lie, he would not lie, would never have agreed that God's moral law was ever at odds with the best interests of the person or public. That the likes of John Wesley placed grace in subservience to justice is Albrecht Ritschl's judgment and no doubt carries truth. However, John Wesley's emphasis on God's love and grace as well as justice moved toward a balance.

One might also reply that Albrecht Ritschl allowed grace at the expense of justice. If one may waive a law at one's discretion; then, among other things, the good which the law purports is shown to be a good that is not good.¹⁵³ One like John Wesley who accepted the presupposition that biblical laws were expressions of God's mind and His eternal word would not allow this. John Wesley may have said to Rudolf Bultmann and Albrecht Ritschl what he said to William Law, if there is no righteous wrath, "ye may go on, ye children of the devil, in doing the works of your father."¹⁵⁴

Even though two centuries later Rudolf Bultmann was armed with modern, critical investigations of New Testament sources, with new light shed on ancient near-eastern religions, and with a radical existential philosophy which turned upside down the traditional "subject-object" distinction,

fundamental assumptions of the past regarding the atonement were carried forward. Though he agreed that the death of Christ was objective, that it could have a supernatural nature and a supra-objective meaning was viewed as impossible. Scriptural statements could not be taken literally verbatim. However, he articulated in a way that his predecessors had not that man's subjective engagement with the cross by faith must first be established before any meaning of the cross could be assigned.

In interpreting the New Testament meaning of the death of Christ, did not John Wesley interpret it according to the philosophy of a medieval system of penance rather than as the New Testament authors intended? To some extent the answer is "yes". His ubiquitous phrase "the merits of Christ" is indicative of this. With this judgment John Wesley himself might agree. However, it does not follow that something of the basic New Testament understanding of the atonement did not shine through it.

In any case, John Wesley, like Rudolf Bultmann in another context, recognized the deficiency and inadequacy of reason and theory in coming to grips with the atonement. Herein, he said, "reason" was "quickly bewildered".¹⁵⁵ However, in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann at this point, he judged that the frail authority of reason ought to defer to the ultimate authority of Holy Scripture. He recognized in regards to the atonement that "to expatiate in this field, we 'find no end, in wandering mazes lost'". But the "only question with me," he said, is "What saith the Scripture?" At bottom, he appealed finally to the literal sense of the assertions of Scripture: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself"; "He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities."¹⁵⁶ Herein, he sought to distinguish between the philosophical explanation of the Scriptural assertions and the Scriptural proclamation itself. Since his day, many scholars, Rudolf Bultmann the prime example, would argue that this was a false dichotomy. He argued that the Scriptural affirmation itself was itself an explanation -- a human one at that. However, though the specie of the argument has

changed, the genus of the argument John Wesley had with the Socinian is similar: is the Scriptural assertion 'to be taken only as a human explanation, itself "a metaphor", or is it in fact God's declaration saying what God says?

THE MEANING OF JUSTIFICATION TO THE INDIVIDUAL

Having had a cursory glance at John Wesley's definition of justification and examined the account of how Jesus procured it, we now seek to ascertain what this purchase meant for man. In what sense could one be said to be justified?

The closest John Wesley came to providing an approximation of a linguistic, historical and a thorough "scientific" investigation of the Scriptural texts regarding justification was offered by abridgment of John Goodwin's Imputatio Fidei. Even at that, John Goodwin provided little grammatical or exegetical earthwork for his conclusions but basically argued his case through a logical reasoning out of the meaning of texts and by presenting the supportive comments of theological commentators. Realizing John Wesley's commendation of his extract Treatise of justification as presenting the Scriptural view of justification, we rely upon it as an important locus among sources for the exposition and defense of his views.

The term "justify" and its cognates, "justifying" and "justification", may be understood first by stating what they did not mean. Justification was not the being "made actually just and righteous" with any habitual or actual, positive or inherent righteousness.¹⁵⁷ He was consistent in asserting that justification was a judicial or "forensic" demonstration. He was apt to refer to Romans 3:25 that God "declares his righteousness" or "showeth forth his righteousness".¹⁵⁸

Herein he was agreeable to Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, and typical Protestantism in understanding justification to refer to an "extrinsic" righteousness, a righteousness occurring outside of man.¹⁵⁹ A sharp demarcation which typified Protestantism after Philip Melanchthon was drawn

then between the external act of God delimited as "justification" and an inward intrinsic renewal in the Catholic sense of Jeremy Taylor and William Law. Moreover, in interpreting justification with a forensic and judicial motif he was following classical Protestantism influenced by Philip Melanchthon's appropriation of Erasmus' Roman legal term for justification.¹⁶⁰

However, while concurring that justification had a judiciary sense, John Wesley's Treatise of Justification was quick to clarify the meaning of this. It was not judiciary in the sense that a judge only had a subordinate power of judicature and must give sentence according to the strict rule of the law. This would mean that to "justify" was to pronounce a person just or absolve him from punishment according to the strict terms of the law where he was accused as a Transgressor.¹⁶¹ Rather, it was used in the judiciary sense in which the Supreme Judge had sovereign power to discharge a man from guilt and punishment in which he is or might justly be accused.¹⁶² One was discharged not because he was clear of such things or was justifiable according to the Law but, because the Judge was willing to remit the penalty, to discharge him as if he were innocent.¹⁶³ In other words, justification was an act whereby God freely forgave all which one had done against the law.¹⁶⁴

Justification was conceived in the negative sense of the Augustinian and early English Reformers: it was the non-imputation of sin. Justification did not carry the positive sense of Reformed orthodoxy in which the extrinsic perfect obedience of Christ was transferred to the sinner for righteousness. God "declares his righteousness' or mercy, by or 'for the remission of the sins that are past'," said John Wesley.¹⁶⁵ Justification was the acquitting of man from sin and the things laid to his charge, "the forgiveness of all our sins, and (what is necessarily implied therein) our acceptance with God".¹⁶⁶

It had both an active and passive sense: actively, it signified the act of God whereby he absolved a believing sinner from the guilt of and punishment due to his sins; passively, it signified "that Alteration which is made in the State of a person, when he is justified" in that previously he was under the

guilt of sin and liable to condemnation, now he was free and acquitted from both.¹⁶⁷ This change in the religious state of a sinner John Wesley called "a relative change".¹⁶⁸

Having established this, it was true to say "that God in every Man's Justification doth impute Righteousness unto him...." The justified man was accounted to be a perfectly righteous man.¹⁶⁹ The nature of this "imputation" (imputatio) and "righteousness" (iustitia) had long been the subject of debate among Protestants, particularly among Puritans in the seventeenth century. The controversy was re-kindled during the eighteenth century Methodist revival when John Wesley espoused a position which was a combination of Calvinism and Arminianism in the tradition of Richard Baxter, John Goodwin, and Daniel Williams.¹⁷⁰ In encapsulated form, the issue was whether the faith of the one who truly believed or the righteousness of Christ himself constituted in His obedience to the moral law was imputed to the believer for righteousness.¹⁷¹ The latter sense was defended by Count Zinzendorf and Calvinists such as James Hervey who urged that the believer was considered to be constituted as perfectly and legally righteous as Christ Himself is.

In an effort to understand John Wesley's position, let us set forth his conception of "righteousness". The most thorough-going didactic study of "righteousness" was presented in John Wesley's extract Treatise of Justification. The endnote sets forth these various Scriptural meanings of "righteousness".¹⁷²

The uses of "righteousness" which had the higher profile in John Wesley's works were "the righteousness of God" as God's method of justifying the sinner, as mercy, as the inward disposition and fruits in sanctification, and as Christ as "the Lord our righteousness".¹⁷³ The term which engaged his continuing polemical powers was the much disputed term "the imputed righteousness of Christ". The question revolved around what; how, and in what sense the righteousness of Christ could be said to be the formal cause or the "condition" (as John Wesley typically referred to it) of justification.

In describing John Wesley's conception of "imputation", let us very briefly set him into the context of the historical theological discussion. Philip Melanchthon, developing what was only implicit in Martin Luther, seems to be responsible for going beyond the Augustinian understanding of justification as the non-imputation of sin and asserting a positive sense as the imputation of the alien, extrinsic righteousness of Christ to the believer for righteousness.¹⁷⁴ This notion that the righteousness of Christ was imputed or reckoned to man as righteousness became the accepted view of Reformed Orthodoxy.

However, the notion of imputed righteousness was absent in Cranmer's Homily of Salvation.¹⁷⁵ Article Eleven of the Thirty-Nine Articles did not settle the question as to whether faith or the righteousness of Christ was imputed for righteousness. Alister McGrath suggests that the early English Reformers were inclined toward the view that faith not the righteousness of Christ was the formal cause of righteousness. Nonetheless, he claims the latter became the accepted position by the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁷⁶

John Wesley could certainly be said to be in the Reformation tradition in so far as he accepted that Christ's righteousness was imputed to the believer. However, on the question of the nature of Christ's righteousness and of this imputation he departed from the mainstream Reformed view and, as we shall now see, followed the Arminian Puritan exposition.

He first seriously encountered the view that Christ's righteousness was imputed to us as righteousness in the Lutheranism of the Moravians and Count Zinzendorf. Count Zinzendorf followed Martin Luther's christological approach to justification and regarded the actual presence of Christ in the believer as man's external righteousness (rather than locating it in God's forensic declaration as Philip Melanchthon and, afterwards, Rudolf Bultmann). In his conversation with John Wesley at Gray's Inn Walks, the Count asserted that at the moment of justification, one was as pure in heart as he ever would be because of the literal presence of the indwelling Christ. "All our perfection is in Christ," he exclaimed.¹⁷⁷ The whole Christian perfection was

not inherent but imputed. One was perfect in Christ but not in himself. The believer was righteous not because righteousness was now a part of his inner nature but only because Christ resided in him. Those who were cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ were clothed in "the Righteousness of Jesus Christ as their Garment, after they have put him on here in Time, and are found clothed with him".¹⁷⁸

John Wesley reacted to this rendition because he judged that it preempted the logical necessity of the need and duty to become intrinsically righteous and to grow in holiness. He argued in so many words that the Count's teaching proposed an untenable contradiction (a "legal fiction") which made God a liar: a believer in Christ was pronounced temperate and chaste who in fact was a drunkard and a whore.¹⁷⁹

The debate took a decidedly Reformed and more sophisticated twist particularly after James Hervey published his "Dialogues Between Thereon and Aspasio" in 1755 espousing "the imputed righteousness of Christ". Not only did it evoke a response from John Wesley but it prompted him eventually to edit and to publish John Goodwin's Imputatio Fidei as his ultimate response.

The gist of the strict Calvinist position with which John Wesley interacted may be sketched in the following way. Derived from Johannes Cocceius' conception of three covenants between God and man, this "federal theology" became characteristic of a Reformed Orthodoxy which was distinguished from both John Calvin and Lutheranism.¹⁸⁰ In making a covenant of works ("a legal covenant") with Adam, the Calvinists understood God to have given his law to Adam. Engraved upon his heart, he was expected perfectly to obey it for his acceptance.¹⁸¹ Adam's fall led to God's establishment of a new covenant, the "covenant of grace".¹⁸² The terms of this covenant were established by a prior covenant in eternity between God the Father and God the Son in which the Father choose the elect in return for the Son's satisfaction of the covenant of works requirements.¹⁸³

The Calvinists argued that the conditions within the covenant of grace applied not to the elect but only to Christ the Mediator. Since man, under the covenant of works of the federal head, the first Adam, disobeyed the divine law, Christ the second federal head "in our stead" fulfilled the covenant of the law by perfectly obeying it.¹⁸⁴ Since he performed all that was conditional in the covenant of works, his obedience was counted as the believer's very own obedience and his pardon.¹⁸⁵

John Wesley resisted this formulation tooth and nail. He could affirm that he adhered to the doctrine "of the imputed righteousness of Christ"; yet, cautioned that this term was "not scriptural", "not necessary", had "done immense hurt", and was not one upon which dispute was warranted.¹⁸⁶ Instead, he replaced the term the "imputed righteousness of Christ" with the Scriptural phrase from Jeremiah 23:6, "The Lord our righteousness. More commonly he inverted the order of "the imputed righteousness of Christ" (or a variation thereof) to "the righteousness of Christ imputed".¹⁸⁷

In good Reformation tradition, he formally acknowledged that the righteousness of Christ was imputed. In this he agreed with his Lutheran (Zinzendorf) and Calvinistic opponents. However, the controlling question was when and in what sense the righteousness of Christ was imputed?¹⁸⁸ He accepted that God had made two covenants with man but ardently rejected the federal theologians' notion of an intratrinitarian covenant between the Father and Son in which satisfaction was exchanged for an "absolute decree" of election.¹⁸⁹ He agreed that God had made a covenant with Adam, usually called "the covenant of works" or, as he stated it, "the righteousness which is of the law".¹⁹⁰ However, he parted company with traditional Reformed theology in affirming that no man -- except Adam -- whether Jew or Greek was ever under this "covenant of works" before or after Christ.¹⁹¹

Furthermore, under the second covenant, the "covenant of grace", "the righteousness which is of faith" was the condition of justification which was given by God to fallen man through the merits and mediation of his only

begotten Son.¹⁹² Increasingly this covenant was progressively revealed from Adam to Abraham to Moses.

We may note that he sharply departed from Reformed theology in denying that this second covenant was founded upon a pact in eternity between the Father and Son. Rather, he insisted with all his might -- for it was an absolutely crucial point of contention between him and the strict Calvinists -- that the manner of acceptance of this covenant was that "the free grace of God, through the merits of Christ, gives pardon to them that believe, that believe with such a faith as, working by love, produces all obedience and holiness".¹⁹³ This latter view shifted the burden from a federal, strict Calvinist conception of a "covenant of works" in which the emphasis of justification's condition was upon God's election and Christ's fulfillment of the covenant by perfect obedience, to that of the atoning death of Christ accepted by faith. John Wesley disputed the strict Calvinist position by arguing that if, in fact, all persons from Adam to the present were under a covenant of works, those especially who were not elected faced an impossible prospect. In order to be saved, they must perfectly fulfill the law. No one such as they, who were already dead in their trespasses, could do this. In contrast, strictly speaking, the covenant of grace required no one to do anything at all but to believe in Him.¹⁹⁴

In further considering the nature of "the righteousness of Christ imputed", John Goodwin had set out five significations of the word "imputed", none of which granted the Reformed understanding. Be that as it may, the chief sense of imputation was said to entail God treating the believer as though he has some qualification to which special privileges are attached, when he does not yet have the qualification and comes to the privileges some other way.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, on this basis, righteousness was said to be "imputed" to him that believed in Christ who partly had and shall have all the privileges which belonged by Covenant to a perfect law-righteousness (though there be none in him) because Christ by his death purchased the privileges for him.¹⁹⁶ The

righteousness of Christ was imputed, that is, it supplied "the defect of personal performance" to those who believe.¹⁹⁷

What was the righteousness of Christ which was imputed? It could not have been Jesus Christ's divine righteousness which pertained to his equality with the Father. Neither was it his internal human righteousness which was the image of God stamped on every power and faculty of his soul. The righteousness of Christ imputed was located in his "external" righteousness. The least part of this entailed his negative and positive righteousness in which respectively, he knew no outward sin as well as he "did all things well". However, his external righteousness implied more than this, more particularly that he suffered bearing our sins till he made a full atonement.¹⁹⁸

Reformed theology had assimilated Oslander's bifurcation of the righteousness of Christ into the active and passive righteousness of Christ.¹⁹⁹ Though John Wesley could for discussion's sake dissect Christ's righteousness into parts, as well as allow for the necessity of both Christ's obedience and death, he felt that separating them was never necessary in speech or in thought.²⁰⁰ Neither Martin Luther nor John Calvin had distinguished them in Oslander's way. At any rate, the Reformers, Reformed theology, and John Wesley in principle agreed both aspects were necessary. However, the strict Calvinists, for example James Hervey, leaned hard upon Christ's active obedience, putting it on an equal level with his passive obedience as the immediate cause of justification.²⁰¹ While John Wesley agreed that active obedience was in some sense necessary, he argued it was not necessary in the sense of providing satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. "Christ by His death alone" atoned for our sins he stated, quoting the Thirty-first Article.²⁰²

He argued that if the Calvinists were right, then Christ's death was unnecessary. For, if, as the Calvinists proposed, Christ's perfect obedience was transferred to the elect for righteousness as perfect as Jesus' righteousness, then the "just" would not have died for the unjust (and would

not need to do so).²⁰³ Further, to reckon the sinner as having kept the law perfectly would imply that God conceived of the justified as worthy of their justification. Moreover, God would countenance a "legal fiction" by declaring one to be what in fact he was not.²⁰⁴ Lastly, the righteousness of the law performed by Christ could not have been our justification. If it were, man's justification would have been by the works of the law.²⁰⁵ This the Scriptures (Romans 3:28) repudiated. Man once having broken the law, could never be recovered by 10,000 observations of the law. For the guilt of one sin could only be purged by the peculiar law of mediator-ship in which "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins" (Hebrews 9:22).²⁰⁶

Perhaps John Wesley's gravest concerns regarding the strict Calvinists' interpretation of the "imputation of Christ's righteousness" were that it preempted the absolutely necessary condition of faith and made redundant the necessary role of the moral law in the Christian's growth of holiness. According to John Wesley, faith was the condition through which the righteousness of Christ as the cause was imputed.²⁰⁷ He was highly -- if not overly -- suspicious of the Moravian proposition that "Christ has done all that was necessary, for the 'Salvation of all Mankind'." While this assertion was qualified and presumably guarded by a succeeding assertion that stated believing was necessary to salvation, he felt the first statement in and of itself was ambiguous because "Christ has not done all which was necessary for the absolute Salvation of all Mankind. For notwithstanding all that Christ has done, he that believeth not shall be damned."²⁰⁸ He accused Count Zinzendorf of asserting "Universal Salvation" by proposing that "all can and shall obtain" salvation.²⁰⁹

He rebutted the Reformed supposition that presumed the keeping of the law which Christ performed "in our stead" was the primary requirement of every person for justification.²¹⁰ No, he protested, man is "justified by faith". This is the corner-stone of the whole Christian building."²¹¹ He adduced, "We are justified without the works of the law."²¹² Faith was the only condition,

for "none is justified but he that believes; without faith no man is justified."²¹³

The strict Calvinist Richard Hill levelled the charge that he made faith a condition necessary to justification by putting "faith" in the place of the proper cause of justification -- Christ's righteousness. Of course, John Wesley flatly denied this. He pointed out that one must distinguish between the "meritorious cause" of justification, the righteousness of Christ, and the "condition" of justification, faith in Him.²¹⁴ He stated, "I am justified through the righteousness of Christ, as the price; through faith, as the condition."²¹⁵ Faith was not "that for which we were accepted", but "that through which we are accepted".²¹⁶

While John Wesley was less inclined to engage in the scholastic enterprise of dissecting the hierarchy of causes involved in justification than John Goodwin and others a century before, nevertheless, his espousal involved distinguishing between the two causes, the "merits of Christ" and "faith" (which he preferred to refer to as a "condition" rather than a "cause"). Reformed theology averred that the righteousness of Christ was the "formal cause". John Wesley in accordance with John Goodwin held it to be the "efficient cause". Appealing to logic, John Wesley contended that the Reformed position countenanced a logical fallacy in assuming that Christ's righteousness was both the formal and efficient cause.²¹⁷ The relation of the merits of Christ and the faith of the recipient to justification must be kept separate; though, he acknowledged, they nevertheless were "inseparable".²¹⁸ The Scriptures nowhere set forth that "the righteousness of Christ" was imputed to man; yet, it did teach that faith was imputed to Abraham, that "faith is' then 'counted to him for righteousness', namely for preceding righteousness."²¹⁹ That is, the Apostle did not say faith was counted to him for subsequent righteousness.²²⁰ Though for John Wesley each had a distinctive contribution, nevertheless, he held that "faith and the righteousness of Christ are inseparable."²²¹ True, Scriptural believing was always a believing in the righteousness of Christ since all true justification

had the righteousness of Christ for its object.²²²

John Wesley's position was basically a re-statement of Martin Luther's and John Calvin's. They stressed faith assisted in justification by grasping and appropriating Christ while claiming that it did not justify, thus attributing all to Christ.²²³ For John Wesley, as for them, faith was the instrumental cause ("formal cause") and Christ and his merits was the sole cause of man's justification (per fidem propter Christum not propter fidem).²²⁴

In 1779, John Wesley reminisced on the times when he had first begun preaching justification by faith. He had been perplexed by the charge that he preached salvation by works.²²⁵ Reflecting on this accusation, he was thunderstruck. Those who held that all were absolutely predestined to either salvation or damnation saw no intermediary position between salvation by works and salvation by absolute decrees. He reasoned that anyone who assumed that the salvation of every person depended wholly and solely on the absolute, unconditional decree without any regard to faith or works foreseen excluded salvation by faith.²²⁶ Therefore, if one denied absolute decrees and admitted the condition "He that believes shall be saved", one must according to "decree" theology assert salvation by works because salvation by anything less than decree is a work.²²⁷ The ultimate issue for him was reduced to the following: either one must maintain with Scripture that faith was a condition and abandon "unconditional decrees" or, hold on to "unconditional decrees" and deny faith as the condition of salvation.²²⁸

THE NATURES OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION DISTINGUISHED

We turn now to consider John Wesley's distinction between "justification" and "sanctification". His conceptions can be put into theological perspective by briefly surveying the salient historical positions. In Augustine's influential view ~~there~~ *WAS NO distinction* between justification and sanctification. What was later delimited as "sanctification" was comprehended in Augustine under "justification". Namely, justification included both the event and the process

of an inward, inherent "being made just".²²⁹

Finding consensus on Martin Luther's view is difficult. While all agree that he spoke of the need for growth and progress in the Christian life following justification, there does not appear to be agreement on whether this signified an inherent "making righteous" following "imputation".²³⁰ In any case, he appears to have been reluctant to state that man actually became righteous in justification. Man was intrinsically a sinner while extrinsically righteous.²³¹ Herein, one sees a parallel between Martin Luther's view and Rudolf Bultmann's view.

Like Augustine, Martin Luther did not distinguish between justification and sanctification but envisioned it as an all-encompassing process of becoming, including the beginning event and consequent process.²³² Philip Melancthon seems responsible for introducing the sharp distinction between justification as a "pronouncing righteous" and regeneration as an internal process of renewal in the Holy Spirit.²³³ This same clear distinction between an extrinsic justification and an inherent sanctification is also drawn by John Calvin, Richard Hooker, and the early Caroline divines.²³⁴

John Calvin affirmed that justification and sanctification were notionally distinct yet inseparable aspects of the believer's incorporation into Christ.²³⁵ Generally, in contrast, the Roman Catholic tradition after Trent held that justification was a process in which a man was made inherently and ontologically righteous.²³⁶ The position of the later Caroline divines, particularly the influential "Holy Living" school of Jeremy Taylor and George Bull, espoused a position similar to the usual Roman Catholic position which subsumes sanctification under justification. Justifying righteousness was seen as inherent to man.²³⁷ Hans Küng both distinguishes and identifies justification and sanctification.²³⁸

With this background, we now come to John Wesley's view. In the "holy living", moral theological tradition prior to Aldersgate, he, even according to his own analysis, identified justification with sanctification, handling

justification, if but by implication, as both an event and a life-long process. How did his experience of faith and assurance at Aldersgate affect his understanding of this relation between justification and sanctification? Judging from his June 1738 sermon "Salvation by Faith", he had yet to delimit clearly the distinction between justification and sanctification. Ignoring the actual term "sanctification" in this sermon, what he later in time would subhead under the term "sanctification" was presently subordinated under justification "taken in the largest sense". More specifically, "justification" encompassed both "deliverance from guilt and punishment" and "a deliverance from the whole body of sin, through Christ formed in his heart".²³⁹ Clearly, in this early sermon, justification was treated as both a deliverance from sin as well as an inherent "making righteous". He had not as yet shed his view of justification as a "making righteous".

However, as time passed, what he had once considered under the umbrella of justification he later clearly divided into justification and sanctification. The crucial difference between his pre-Aldersgate and post-Aldersgate view of justification was that prior to Aldersgate, baptism and the holy life were the necessary conditions of justification; after Aldersgate, he understood evangelical, Christ-revealed faith to be the necessary condition. His immediate post-Aldersgate position was congruent with the early English Reformers' doctrine: for example, Thomas Cranmer, in the Homily of Salvation, expounded that the nature of justification consisted of man being made righteous "by faith only".²⁴⁰

Nonetheless, as a result of his visit to Germany and reading of the Homilies, his late 1738 publication of his extract of the Homilies seemed now apprised of some distinction between being "justified" and being "made just".²⁴¹

In September, 1739, he stated his final position. Explaining how he differed from other clergy of the Church of England, he declared that he believed "justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it".²⁴² Though apparently some of the Moravians had begun to

direct his thinking toward a contrast between justification and holiness, the process of achieving clarity took some time. In his 1741 sermon "Christian Perfection", he separated the phrase "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (which he now related to Christian perfection) from its former combination with "to forgive us our sins". This former combination had previously signified justification in his mind.²⁴³

He presented his most conscious and telling distinction between justification and sanctification in his 1748 sermon "The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God". In an allusion to Count Zinzendorf and, perhaps as Albert Outler suggests, William Law, he took issue with the position which suggested that being justified and being born of God were only different expressions denoting the same thing.²⁴⁴ Rather, he insisted, they were "easily distinguished as being not the same, but things of a widely different nature".²⁴⁵ Like Philip Melanchthon, John Wesley understood these as two distinct ontological realities. He was insistent they should not be confounded because of the confusion this would bring to the interpretation of "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."²⁴⁶

Even though both realities had different natures, they occurred at the same moment. Every believer who was justified was at one and the same moment born of God just as every one born of God was at one and the same moment justified.²⁴⁷ However, though inseparable in point of time, John Wesley noted in 1760 that justification logically preceded the new birth. For conceptually, the turning away of God's wrath preceded the Spirit's working in the heart.²⁴⁸

Since the moment of new birth was equally the first moment of sanctification, what was said of the new birth could more largely be referred to under the rubric of "sanctification".²⁴⁹ At the moment of the new birth, the gradual work of sanctification began in which the believer went from grace to grace to full salvation from all sin in entire sanctification.²⁵⁰ John Wesley said "the moment a sinner is justified his heart is cleansed in a low degree".²⁵¹

Therefore, both justification and sanctification were "undoubtedly instantaneous".²⁵² In whatever moment one believed, he was justified.²⁵³ The new birth when a person is "born again" is analogous to natural childbirth when "a man is born at once". Being sanctification's "gate" or "threshold", the new birth was only the first point of sanctification and not the whole process.²⁵⁴ Gradual sanctification progressed until one may be instantaneously perfected in entire sanctification.²⁵⁵

Summarizing his exposition of the relation between justification and sanctification in the mid to latter 1740's, John Wesley asserted that justification and sanctification were not only notionally but ontologically wholly distinct workings of God.²⁵⁶ Justification was a "relative change", what God did "for us", an extrinsic reversal of relations between God and man in which God remitted man's sins. God's ledger was amended but man in his essential nature was not. However, sanctification indicated an intrinsic, "real change", what God did "in us", in which God actually transformed the believer's human nature and re-created it into that nature which Adam had before the Fall. As John Wesley said, "God through Him first accounts and then makes us righteous." Accordingly, "the righteousness which is of God by faith" is both imputed and inherent'.²⁵⁷

This theological posture left him sitting comfortably within the Reformation tradition of Philip Melanchthon, John Calvin, representative Reformed theology, Richard Hooker, the post-Reformation tradition of the earlier Caroline divines, and Arminian Puritans such as Richard Baxter and John Goodwin.²⁵⁸ John Wesley's theology distinguished him from Roman Catholic thought after Trent as well as from his former "Holy Living" school in which justification subsumed sanctification and signified essentially the process of man's becoming inherently and ontologically righteous. This fact also points out a variance between him and his oft-quoted Homily of Salvation, in which Thomas Cranmer described justification as a being "made just" by "fayth onely".

Although Hans Küng affirms that justification occurs through faith alone, John Wesley would dissent from Hans Küng's view that justification is also God's making man objectively and ontologically holy.²⁵⁹ However, if they dropped their own formal definitions which dictate the discussions, they would seem to agree that man is both declared righteous and made righteous. Nevertheless, a subtle difference seems to remain, that John Wesley in the Protestant tradition envisioned justification as a work and happening of God, complete in and of itself, by faith alone, and logically as well as ontologically divisible (which Hans Küng does not accept) from a "making righteous" and good works.

SUMMARY

In summary, John Wesley most commonly described justification as "pardon and acceptance with God", "the forgiveness of sins", or "remission of sins". He stated that justification was the act of God the Father for the sake of the propitiation of the Son whereby He demonstrated his righteousness or mercy by remitting the sins of the past and acquitting the sinner from all guilt and punishment due his offenses.

The "meritorious cause" or source of justification was God's grace specifically expressed in "the merits of Jesus Christ" or, just the same, "what Christ hath done and suffered for us". A dramatic shift in his perspective of Jesus Christ occurred in the Spring of 1738 from "Christ our Pattern" to "Christ our Atonement", the "meritorious cause" of justification. His vision became fixed upon the eternally alive, transcendent, and abidingly immanent person Jesus Christ Himself, and Him expressly revealed in and through His obedient life and sacrificial death. In coming to know Jesus as his Saviour who had died for his sins, he claimed he now personally received from, communed with, and was himself indwelt by the actual God-Man who had once died for him on a cross. What had previously been an eschatological hope was now a present reality. Jesus Christ "the Saviour of sinners" was

the fountainhead of the panoptical spectrum of salvation.

Similarly, Rudolf Bultmann located the importance of Jesus in the "deed of divine grace", his death on the cross, "the salvation-occurrence". He would deem speculation about the divine deed's place in the chain of causes as irrelevant scholasticism. For Rudolf Bultmann, unlike John Wesley and other traditional Protestants, the life of Christ was not a factor in man's salvation. The death of Jesus spoke for his life. Rudolf Bultmann would think of the traditional theological assertion that Jesus perfectly fulfilled the Law as a supposition that could never be confirmed and one which arose from a deficient way of thinking. The death of Christ as an objective, historical event could not be seen as the saving "ground" of salvation in and of itself separate from the faith that resolves to accept it as such. However, it is the "ground" in the sense that salvation's origin is the historical fact of Jesus' death. Furthermore, it is the ground by the fact that the cross' proclamation is God's saving Word which summons persons to submit to it, and, thereupon, discover the existentiell self-knowledge that Jesus is the saving Word in the "eschatological now". Rudolf Bultmann would dissent from John Wesley by denying that the Person Jesus now reveals Himself supernaturally to men and personally appropriates to them the saving effects of His life and death. Trying to assert such of Jesus would be trying to know Jesus "kata sarka". However, they both agree that the death of Christ is an event which may happen to and for and in man in the present.

In explaining how the death of Jesus Christ procured justification and salvation, John Wesley often recited appropriate passages of Scripture which he interpreted literally. In explaining the atonement, he most often employed the "satisfaction" and "penal" theories as developed and expressed in the Reformed tradition. He said that Jesus' death was an acceptable price for man's sin in violating God's majesty and law. Moreover, in the manner of Reformed theology, he also stressed Jesus' suffering of the law's penalty in place of humankind. Jesus Christ was the propitiatory sacrifice who suffered

and took upon Himself man's penalty for sin thereby averting God's wrath from him.

In the tradition of Richard Baxter and John Goodwin, he preached a "hypothetical universalism" which - contrary to strict Calvinism - affirmed that Christ died for all persons with justification having as a prerequisite belief.

John Wesley rejected the Socinian notion that Christ's death was only "a metaphor" rather than an objective event which effected a change in God's relations with man. In the Reformation tradition, he interpreted the force of Christ's death to lie in the fact that it was a demonstrative act of God which had a necessary correlation to God and His relations with man rather than simply a subjective statement from which man could draw helpful insights and religious encouragement.

John Wesley did not conceive of the term to "justify" in the Roman Catholic or Catholic-Anglican sense of "making just" but in the forensic, extrinsic sense of God declaring his righteousness "for the remission of the sins that are past". Having said this, he differed sharply from the orthodox Reformed position. Although he would agree with the Reformed view that justification was the imputation of Christ's extrinsic righteousness to the sinner, he defined "imputation" "negatively" as the non-imputation of sin (remission of sins) rather than "positively" as a transference of Christ's obedience to the sinner. In other words, he identified himself with a tradition, including the early English Reformers and the Puritans Richard Baxter and John Goodwin, which held that justification was the imputation of faith for righteousness rather than the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.²⁶⁰ What makes for confusion is that he expressed the content of the former position in the form of the latter. He repudiated the unmitigated, Reformed stress upon the righteous obedience of Christ for at least three reasons. One, this opinion was underpinned by "the decrees" of God; two, it detracted from the necessity of Christ's atoning death and personal faith; three, it undercut the ontological necessity of inner and outward transformation in holiness.

Justification was a forensic, extrinsic declaration of God's righteousness by the remission of man's sins contradistinguished logically and ontologically from sanctification which was an intrinsic, real change in the sinner's human nature. Though disparate from Catholic tradition which had subsumed sanctification under justification, his understanding followed a main, Reformation stream from Philip Melanchthon and John Calvin to both early and later Arminian-Calvinist divines such as Richard Baxter and John Goodwin.

1. John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley, ed. Thomas Jackson, 3rd ed., complete and unabridged, 14 vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1979), vol. 7, p. 317.
2. On March 6, 1738, he first claimed to have "offered salvation by faith alone"; see, Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 1, p. 442; John Wesley, The Oxford Edition of the Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, Vol 11: The Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion and Certain Related Open Letters (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 177.

From the inception of his field preaching in Bristol April 2, 1739, he attests to this new theme "The just shall live by faith" throughout his Journal. John Wesley, The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M. Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford Enlarged from Original Manuscripts, with Notes from Unpublished Diaries, Annotations, Maps, and Illustrations, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, stand. ed., 8 vols. (London: Epworth Press, 1938), vol. 2, pp. 211, 256, 264, 273, 293f, 319, 336, 346, 465.

3. John Wesley, The Letters of The Rev. John Wesley A.M. Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, ed. John Telford, 8 vols. (London: Epworth Press, 1960), vol. 4, p. 303.

While under fire from the strict Calvinists for the 1770 Minutes' perceived leaning to "works righteousness", he insisted he had never renounced the grand doctrine of justification by faith. Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 448f.

4. John Wesley, The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, Vol. 3: Sermons III: 71 - 114, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), p. 204.
5. Sometimes the two branches could be enlarged to three or simply comprehended under one point. In 1761 justification by faith was included among one of "the three grand scriptural doctrines" along with Original Sin and Holiness; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 146.

Again, in 1764 these three grand doctrines were the "essentials" upon which he was happy to effect a union with other clergymen; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 237. In 1788 he urged John Mann to "keep to your one point, Christ dying for us and living in us"; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 8, p. 69.

6. In contrast, John Wesley in 1787 rejoiced over the fact that the Methodists did not think or speak of "justification so as to supercede sanctification". By the same token, they neither thought or spoke of "sanctification so as to supercede justification"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 507. "They take care to keep each in its own place, laying equal stress on one and the other," he stated. Since God had joined these together, man was not to put them asunder. Therefore, while they were not always in every place equally stressed, he claimed to have maintained each "with equal zeal and diligence". Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 507.
7. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 302.
8. John Wesley, The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief, Frank Baker, Vol. 2: Sermons II: 34-37, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), pp.38-40.

9. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 212. One may note with interest the concurrence within world-wide mainline Methodism of an eclipse of this fundamental doctrine and a continuing decline in Methodism's vitality and number of adherents.
10. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 151.
11. Wesley, Works, ed.-in chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28.

He said if one took away or explained the Scriptural doctrines of Justification or of the New Birth in the manner of the Unitarian Dr. John Taylor, Christianity would be no better than heathenism. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 67.
12. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 390f. Richard Hill pointed out that John Wesley contradicted himself by affirming at once that justification was the doctrine upon which the church stood while allowing that a pious Churchman who had not clear conceptions of justification by faith, even denied it, might be saved.

Wesley answered the charge of contradiction by arguing that the two propositions did not speak of the same thing. The latter, he said, spoke of justification by faith and the former of trusting in the righteousness or merits of Christ. Only trusting in Christ's merits was to be identified as the articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae.

This is a distinction that is implicit in his theology. He drew a distinction in theology between a reality as it was in itself, the meaning of this reality, and even the particular way this meaning was expressed; see, John Wesley, The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, Vol. 1: Sermons I: 1-33, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), pp. 451f. His reluctance in rendering a verdict on someone who had not a clear conception of justification by faith stemmed from the fact that he eschewed making a doctrinal formulation per se a prerequisite of salvation instead of the experiential reality itself to which the doctrine and its manner of expression correlated. So, here he was probably referring to the fact that the existentiell experience of trusting in Christ's merits was the articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae rather than the rational formulation of this reality. See the related discussion in Howe Octavius Thomas, "John Wesley's Understanding of the Distinction between Theological Essentials and Opinions" (M.A. Thesis, University of Bristol, 1983), pp. 57-64.
13. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 179.
14. Ibid., p. 140. He informed Bishop Warburton that justification by faith was "the plain, old doctrine of the Church of England"; Ibid., p. 351.
15. For Martin Luther the article of justification was the word of the gospel to which all else was subordinate; see, Alister E. McGrath, Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification, Vol. 2: From 1500 to the Present Day (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) p. 10. See also, Thomas, "Essentials and Opinions", p. 3.

16. In 1765 he told John Newton that he thought on Justification just as he had done for twenty-seven years, "just as Mr. Calvin does." Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 298. Following the repercussions of the 1770 Minutes, he avowed in 1772 that he had not renounced the grand doctrine of justification by faith; Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 448f.
17. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 317.
18. When the Methodist movement was maturing in the 1760's and developing into established societies of justified persons, an increasing accent on sanctification was arguably appropriate to those who now needed to be motivated to grow in grace and holiness.

At a time in the Revival when he felt the teaching of holiness was particularly urgent, he grew more insistent in his appeal to counteract the perceived Calvinian Methodist diminution of sanctification. He deemed his Calvinistic fellows to have exalted justification to the exclusion of sanctification, thereby damaging Christian obedience. He stated, "The imagination, that faith supercedes holiness is the marrow of Antinomianism." Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 317.

The more insistent he grew, the more resistant and confirmed others became in the view that he had veered away from justification by faith. The accusation that he allowed sanctification to displace justification was based on the presupposition of a strict and a "hyper-Calvinism", sometimes of the Tobias Crisp variety which espoused a doctrinal antinomianism. See, Peter Toon, The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689-1765 (London: The Olive Tree, 1967), p. 145.
19. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 192.
20. John Fletcher, The Works of The Rev. John Fletcher, Late Vicar of Madeley, 9 vols. (London: John Mason, 1859-1860), Vol 2: An Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense and The First, Second, and Third Checks to Antinomianism, p. 312.
21. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 155f.
22. Ibid., p. 156
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 130.
25. Ibid., p. 106; vol. 2, p. 156.
26. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264; Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 388f.
27. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 156f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 13.
28. Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, pp. 79f.
29. Ibid., pp. 146, 315.

30. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 107.
31. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 83; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 177.
32. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 83; John Wesley, Wesley's Standard Sermons: Consisting of Forty-Four Discourses Published in Four Volumes, in 1746, 1748, 1750, and 1760 (Fourth Edition, 1787) To Which Are Added Nine Additional Sermons Published in Vols. I to IV of Wesley's Collected Works, 1771, ed. and annotated Edward H. Sugden, 2 vols. (London: The Epworth Press, 1921), vol. 1, p. 45; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 177.
33. Respectively, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 68, 106; vol. 2, p. 166; Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, pp. 42, 378. Full sanctification could be labelled as "complete salvation" or "full salvation"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 166, 167.
34. Indeed, this did not mean that each in every particular circumstance should be equally stressed. In June 1748 the Methodist Conference observed that the inspired writers spoke in public "almost continually of the state of justification. But more rarely, at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification"; Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, From the First, Held in London, By The Late Rev. John Wesley, A.M. In the Year 1744, (London: Thomas Cordeux, 1812), vol. 1, p. 35. In a letter to the Countess of Huntington, Wesley observed that those who have recently come into the harvest are led to think and speak more largely of justification. And "it may be proper for them so to do"; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 57.

In 1760 he intimated that most Methodists had very nearly left off preaching on "practical religion" in preaching on justification. He felt the former could be preached without neglecting the latter. His method was to preach justification when he had "the greatest number of unawakened hearers"; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 104. In 1766, he urged that sanctification ought to be freely declared to believers so that they would press on to perfection; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 6. While the advice was not always uniform, he began to recommend the preaching of "going on to perfection" to those persons just justified; Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, pp. 103, 138; Cf. p. 145.

Whatever the case, as the Methodist societies matured in the faith, greater insistence upon sanctification than justification is noticed, none the least for the reason that he was now dealing with believers who he deemed needed entire sanctification rather than justification. Furthermore, by the mid 1760's the novelty and the brouhaha over justification had seen its best day, reducing the need for polemical attention to it.

35. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 506.
36. Wesley, Sermons, ed. E. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 45. This latter phrase "deliverance from the whole body of sin" was significantly altered in 1771 to "a deliverance from the power of sin". Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 124.

37. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 106; vol. 3, p. 204.
 38. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 107, vol. 1, p. 189.
 39. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 157.
 40. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 107.
 41. Wesley, Minutes, 1744, p. 4; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 226.
 42. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 186.
 43. In addition to the texts cited so far, see also these: John Wesley, A Treatise on Justification: Extracted from Mr. John Goodwin (Bristol: William Pine, 1765), p. 111; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 337; vol. 5, p. 90; vol. 7, p. 363; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 342.
 44. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 377; see also Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 157.
 45. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 116; Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 266; vol. 2, pp. 186, 191; vol. 5, pp. 263f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 497.
 46. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 189, vol. 2, pp. 120, 157; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, 2, 38, 40, 66f, 112f; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 13.
- In 1765 justification was described as "the forgiveness of all our sins"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 157; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, 2, 40, 66f.
47. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 157; vol. 1, pp. 189f.
 48. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 109; Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory, and Now Reprinted for the Use of Private Families in Two Parts, Part 1, (London: Robert Banks and Son, n.d.), p. 31.
 49. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 326; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 191; vol. 4, p. 133; Wesley Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 105, 108f, 177; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 115; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 139.
 50. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 326.
 51. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 117; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, pp. 36f, 92, 112f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 189.
 52. John Wesley's extract of 1765 of John Goodwin's Imputatio Fidei asserts that "righteousness" herein may be interpreted as "mercy". Already by 1749 this rendering is current with him. From where did he get it? Possibly from the homily, "The Salvation of Mankind" where it is used. See, Homilies, Banks, pp. 28f.

53. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 105; Wesley Letters, vol. 2, p. 186; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 189.
54. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, pp. 28f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 117.
55. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 245, 249, 374; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 454.
56. Wesley, Sermons, ed. Sugden, p. 45. In this sermon before the University, rather than initially using the word "justification", he, on the basis of the text Ephesians 2:8, spoke of "salvation". Eight pages into the sermon he broached the word "justification" concluding that the salvation he had described was "often expressed in the word 'justification'"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 124.
57. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 121.
58. Ibid., p. 122.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 106; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 186, 224.
62. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 122.
63. Ibid., pp. 123f.
64. Wesley, Minutes 1744, p. 4.
65. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 226.
66. Ibid., pp. 226f.
67. Ibid.
68. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 189.
69. Ibid., pp. 189f.
70. Ibid., p. 190.
71. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 2.
72. Ibid., pp. 2f.
73. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 157f.
74. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 229; vol. 5, p. 90.
75. In Proposition 33 in his extract of the Aphorismes he deleted Richard Baxter's enumeration of the causes. Cf. John Wesley, ed. An Extract of Mr. Richard Baxter's Aphorisms Of Justification, 2nd ed. (London: Strahan, 1745) p. 24 with Richard Baxter, Aphorismes

- of Justification With Their Explication Annexed. Wherein Also is Opened the Nature of The Covenants, Satisfaction, Righteousness, Faith, Works, Etc. Published Especially for the use of The Church of Kederminster in Worcestershire (Hague: Abraham Brown, 1655), p. 135. Likewise, he excised much of John Goodwin's breakdown of the causes in his Treatise on Justification.
76. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 354; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 213.
 77. Wesley, Sermons, ed. Sugden, p. 38; John Wesley, "Thoughts on Salvation by Faith", The Arminian Magazine: For the Year 1779. Consisting of Extracts and Original Treatises on Universal Redemption (London: Frys, Couchman, and Collier, 1779), vol. 2, p. 119.
 78. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 309, 213f; vol. 3, pp. 203f; Wesley Sermons, ed. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 37; Fletcher, Works, vol. 2, p. 213.
 79. John F. Clarkson, John H. Edwards, William J. Kelly, John J. Welch, The Church Teaches: Documents of the Church in English Translation (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1964), pp. 233f; Richard Baxter, Aphorismes, p. 135. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, pp. 139f.
 80. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, pp. 262f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 260f.
 81. Gustaf Aulén, Christus Victor: An Historical Study of The Three Main Types of the Idea of The Atonement, authorized trans. A. G. Hebert (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), pp. 113f.
 82. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1. p. 241.
 83. Thomas à Kempis' Christ says to his disciple, "The more, my Son, thou forsakest thy self, the nearer approaches thou makest toward Me." He encourages the disciple to aspire to Life by keeping the commandments and to get in the right way to happiness by imitating his cross. Thomas à Kempis, The Christian Pattern: Or, a Treatise of the Imitation of Jesus Christ, trans. George Stanhope, 10th ed. (London: 1721), pp. 265f.
 84. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 240.
 85. Ibid., p. 241.
 86. Ibid., p. 264.
 87. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 229.
 88. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 82.
 89. E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition: Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1947), pp. 167f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 120, 141, 224.
 90. Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 141.

91. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 271.
92. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol.1, pp. 141, 224f.
93. Respectively, Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 326; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 112; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 191; vol. 3, pp. 229,249; Wesley, Treatise on Justice, p. 3; Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28; Luke Tyerman, The Life and Times of The Rev. John Wesley: Founder of the Methodists, 3 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1871), vol. 3, p. 100; Wesley, Works, vol. 11, p. 115; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 226; vol. 3, p. 229; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 157; Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 339; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 90; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 390, 442; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 262; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 112, 114; Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 157; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 390.
94. Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 450f.
95. Ibid. p. 454.
96. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 391, 403, 432f.
97. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 262; Cf. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 191, 226. In October 1738 he bemoaned the fact that the Oxford gownsmen tried to "establish their own righteousness" as the joint cause with that of our Lord; Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 226.
98. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 226; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 110f, 113, 115.
99. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 226f; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 326, vol. 3, p. 28.
100. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 124.
101. Charles J. Abbey and John H. Overton, The English Church in The Eighteenth Century, rev. and abridged (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1906), p. 215.

Certainly it was subjected to vigorous attacks by Deists such as Matthew Tindal and later eighteenth century Thomas Paine; Sir Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1902), vol. 1, note pp. 140, 460.
102. Abbey, English Church, pp. 130f.
103. Frank Baker feels almost certain that the tract The Scriptural Doctrine of Atonement by Philo-Biblos reputed to be John Wesley's was in fact not his. Frank Baker, A Union Catalogue of the Publications of John and Charles Wesley (Durham, North Carolina: The Divinity School, Duke University, 1966), p. 95.

That he would have liked to publish a tract had he found an appropriate one to abridge finds some support in his remarks to Charles Wesley that he had found nothing "on the Atonement fit for

- a Deist"; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 281. His extract of the chaplain to the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, John Howe's The Living Temple, was inserted into A Christian Library. It contained a thirty-two page explanation of the "satisfaction" theory of the atonement which appears to be the most comprehensive argument on the atonement in John Wesley's works. There are also some occasional substantial but brief statements in his extract of John Goodwin's Treatise of Justification. Also, there is a useful discussion in John Wesley's sermon "The Lord Our Righteousness".
104. See, Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 345-357.
 105. Aulén, Christus Victor, pp. 144ff; L. W. Grensted, A Short History of The Doctrine of The Atonement (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962), pp. 199, 207, 222; Alister E. McGrath, Iustitia Dei: A History of The Christian Doctrine of Justification, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) Vol. 1: From the Beginnings to 1500, pp. 55-58.
 106. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 353. In explaining the atoning work of Christ to William Law, he used the biblical parable of the creditor who had two debtors (Luke 7:40f). The student is required to fill in the gaps of the account. Man had contracted a debt with God which he could not pay. God had a right to insist on payment. If there was no payment forthcoming, God may deliver the wrong-doer to his tormentors. But because the Son died to atone for man's sins, and to pay our debt, God would release us from our debt; Ibid., p. 352.
 107. Ibid.
 108. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 94; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 212.
 109. Wesley, Letters vol. 3, pp. 353f.
 110. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 261, 186.
 111. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 354.
 112. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 354f.
 113. In trying to uphold the integrity of the atonement, he was conscious of the need to balance God's justice with his mercy. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 345f.
 114. Ibid.
 115. Ibid., pp. 385, 346.
 116. Ibid., pp. 345f.
 117. Ibid., p. 348. He contended that if God was never angry, He could never be reconciled as the Scriptures declared he was; Ibid., vol. 6, p. 298.
 118. Ibid., pp. 356f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 186.

119. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 356.
120. Ibid., pp. 356, 373; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 186.
121. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 354ff; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 261.
122. John Kent, Lecture, "Twentieth Century Theology", University of Bristol, Autumn Term 1983; Sydney Cave, The Doctrine of the Work of Christ; The London Theological Library, ed. Professor Eric S. Waterhouse (London: University of London Press, Hodder and Stoughton, 1937), p. 83.
123. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 411.
124. Ibid.
125. Ibid.
126. Ibid., pp. 410f.
127. Aulén, Christus Victor, p. 145; Grensted, Short History, p. 222.
128. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 184ff; John Wesley, ed. "The Scripture Doctrine Concerning Predestination, Election, and Reprobation Extracted from a Late Author." The Arminian Magazine: For the Year 1779. Consisting of Extracts and Original Treatises on Universal Redemption (London: Frys, Couchman, and Collier, 1779), vol. 2, pp. 111ff.
129. Wesley, ed., "The Scripture Doctrine Concerning Predestination...", The Arminian Magazine, 1779, vol. 2, pp. 111ff.
130. Ibid., p. 116.
131. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 180f.
132. Frederick J. Powicke, The Reverend Richard Baxter Under The Cross (1662-1691) (London: Jonathon Cape, Ltd., 1927), p. 237; McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 44.
133. Wesley, "The Scripture Doctrine Concerning Predestination ...", Arminian Magazine, 1779, vol. 2, p. 117.
134. Alistair McGrath argues that John Calvin's followers were responsible for unequivocally developing this doctrine which he says they argued was implicit in John Calvin's soteriology. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 40.
135. Nicholas Lewis Zinzendorf, Sixteen Discourses on Jesus Christ Our Lord. Being An Exposition of The Second Part of the Creed. Preached at Berlin, 2nd ed., trans. from the High Dutch (London: William Bowyer, 1750), p. 37.
136. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 357.
137. Ibid.

138. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 108.
139. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 108.
140. He stated that God vouchsafed to save us; God commended his love toward us; God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 118, 185, 260f.
141. This was God's "unspeakable gift"; Ibid., p. 118.
142. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 186.
143. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 108; vol. 6, p. 298.
144. Aulén, Christus Victor, pp. 147f.
145. Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 298.
146. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 109.
147. Ibid.
148. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 108.
149. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 169, 183f.
150. Albrecht Ritschl commented that Luther's teaching on the bondage of the will to sin was "an unfortunate botch". Therefore, on this basis a satisfaction to God was not needed; McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 176.
151. Albrecht Ritschl, The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation: The Positive Development of the Doctrine, Eng. trans, ed, by H. R. Mackintosh, A. B. Macaulay (Clifton, New Jersey: Reference Book Publishers, Inc., 1966), pp. 264f.
152. In order to maintain this, Albrecht Ritschl and critics like him conceived of the law merely as a means to the moral ends of the people in the state. He, and Rudolf Bultmann like him, had to presume that the law could not be of fixed, eternal nature such that it always represented the best interests of the individual in every situation. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 166f.

Another example in the nineteenth century of the move away from the conception of sin as an affront against God which required satisfaction was Johann Dippel's adaptation to theology of Thomas Hobbes' philosophy of the state and punishment. Sin was viewed not as offense against God but as injury to man's best welfare. God's threats against man were not to be viewed as divine wrath against sinners but as a discouraging of self-destructive actions; McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 144.
153. It might be argued that the effect of the penal theory is to undermine justice in that the sinner is not punished but that the innocent is punished. Nonetheless, the wrong is punished and it is seen to be judged before the public. Further, God is vindicated of moral ambivalency. Moreover, the punishment and judgment of the sinner is meted out and vicariously experienced in the sinner through the "innocent's" death. The extravagant, negative cost of

the wrong is portrayed by the wilful substitution of the innocent for the guilty.

154. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 345.
155. Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 298.
156. Ibid.
157. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief, Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 187; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, pp. 1, 39; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 118.
158. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief, Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 106; vol. 1, p. 189; Wesley, Sermons, ed. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 42; John Wesley, Explanatory Notes Upon The New Testament (Salem, Ohio: Schmull Publishers, 1976), p. 370.
159. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 14
160. Ibid., pp. 31f.
161. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 2.
162. Ibid., pp. 2f.
163. Ibid., p. 2.
164. Ibid.
165. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 106; Wesley, Sermons, ed. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 42.
166. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 157; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, pp. 39, 111.
167. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 126.
168. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 158.
169. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 4.
170. See Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 40f, 56f.
171. Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 3.
172. "Righteousness" or "Justice", when attributed to God and called, therefore, "the righteousness of God", may mean the following: (1) the universal and absolute holiness of his nature which made him averse to contradicting his rules of justice and equity (2) His truth or faithfulness in keeping promise (3) His gracious dispensation, the most frequent signification, towards his people by which he was still inclinable to do them good and deliver them out of trouble (Psalm 145:7) (4) His way or method of justification (Romans 3:21; 1:17; 10:3) which was different from man's way of justification (5) that way or means by which men seek to be justified (6) God's severity against sin and sinners (Romans 3:25, 26) (7) the assignation of Christ as "the righteousness of God" in which he was the Author and Mediator of righteousness or justification which

God gave (8) the company of those that were made righteous or justified; Ibid., pp. 127f.

Another cluster of meanings centred around justification's application to men. They consisted of the following: (1) the frame of the heart which was made up of all those holy dispositions which were found to some degree in every child of God (2) the fruits, works, or actions from a child of God's heart (Acts 10:35; I John 3:7) (3) the particular disposition which inclined a man to deal uprightly with all men together with the fruit of such a disposition (4) Justification itself (in the passive sense) was sometimes expressed by the word "Righteousness" (Galatians 2:21) (5) sometimes Christ ("the Lord our righteousness") was called (by an ellipsis of the efficient cause) the righteousness of man and the procurer of their justification or righteousness (6) a metonymy of the cause for the effect or of the antecedent for the consequent blessings which accompanied righteousness may be expressed by the term righteousness (7) the word "righteousness" along with its modifier meant one and the same act of God: for example, "imputing righteousness" meant free justifying. That is, the expression "imputing righteousness" meant nothing else but freely to justify (8) righteousness signified a society or company of justified ones; Ibid., pp. 128f.

173. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 377, 382, 383, 374.
174. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 14, 24f.
175. Ibid., p. 102.
176. Ibid., p. 303
177. Nicholaus Ludwig Count von Zinzendorf, Nicholaus Ludwig Count von Zinzendorf Bishop of the Church of the Moravian Brethren : Nine Public Lectures on Important Subjects in Religion Preached in Fetter Lane Chapel in London in the Year 1746, trans. and ed. George W. Forell (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1973), p. 18.
178. John Wesley, Extract of Count Zinzendorf's Discourses on the Redemption of Man by the Death of Christ (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Printed by John Gooding, 1744), p. 47.
179. John Wesley, A Short View of the Difference between the Moravian Brethren lately in England, and The Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley: Extracted Chiefly from a Late Journal 2nd ed. (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1748), pp. 14f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker vol. 1, p. 188.
180. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 40-43
181. God's part of the contract consisted in his determination to bless Adam for as long as he obeyed the divine law. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 114; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 27.
182. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 41.
183. Likewise, the Spirit agreed to regenerate those for whom Christ died and to convey to them the gift of faith. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 59; McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 43f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 378.

One must point out that the covenant of works did not obsolesce upon the enactment of the covenant of grace. It still pertained to the non-elect while the covenant of grace related only to the elect.

184. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 378; Cf. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, p. 134.

Since he was the federal head, the "obedience of our Surety is accepted instead of our own"; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 378.
185. His perfect obedience was translated to the elect so that they "have no more need of pardon than Christ Himself". Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 378, 379.
186. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol.10, pp. 383, 427; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 372.
187. He perhaps had picked up this expression from John Goodwin; Wesley, Treatise of Justification, p. 5
188. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 453.
189. He did not deny that Father and Son concurred in the redemption of man; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 378.
190. Certainly God required obedience in all its parts as the condition of eternal continuance in holiness and happiness. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 204; vol. 2, p. 27; Cf. John Wesley's 1753 extract of John Smith's "A Discourse Treating of Legal Righteousness, Evangelical Righteousness, or, the Righteousness of Faith: The Difference Between the Law and the Gospel, and the Old and New Covenant of Justification and Divine Acceptance; And The Conveyance of The Evangelical Righteousness to us by Faith." in A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgements of the Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity Which Have Been in the English Tongues, 30 vols. (London: T. Blanshard and J. Kershaw, 1819-1826), vol. 11, pp. 287, 289.
191. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 27. Neither did he incorporate in his scheme the Salmurian teaching of an additional covenant made with Moses and Israel upon condition of perfect obedience to the law of nature as clarified by the written law and ceremonies; McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 43.
192. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 206; vol. 2, p. 27.
193. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 27.
194. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 210, 207.
195. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, p. 133.
196. Ibid.
197. Ibid., p. 94.
198. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 452f.

199. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 372; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 120.

For instance, William Perkins asserted that remission of sins and freedom from the guilt and the punishment of sin were gained by Christ's passion while one's righteousness was acquired through the righteousness merited by Christ's perfect obedience to the law. William Perkins, The Work of William Perkins, intro. and ed. Ian Breward, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics, no. 3, ed. advisory board James Atkinson, James D. Douglas, et al (Appleford, Abingdon, England: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1970), p. 233; Cf. Grensted, Short History, p. 249.
200. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 453.
201. James Hervey could speak of the active obedience separately and alone as the satisfaction for sins.
202. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 379, 384; Wesley, Treatise on Justification, pp. 115.
203. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, p. 74.
204. Ibid., p. 90.
205. Ibid., p. 27.
206. Ibid., pp. 90, 130f.
207. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 390.
208. John Wesley, A Short View of the Difference between The Moravian Brethren, Lately in England and The Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley. Extracted chiefly from a late Journal (W. Strahan, 1745) p. 14.
209. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 498. In the 1750 edition of Zinzendorf's Sixteen Discourses, Zinzendorf altered the words to "all can and ought to obtain" salvation. Zinzendorf, Sixteen Discourses, p. 25.
210. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, pp. 134f.
211. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28.
212. Ibid.
213. Ibid., p. 162.
214. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 390.
215. Ibid.
216. Ibid.
217. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, p. 142.
218. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 390; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 454.

219. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 20, p. 390; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28.

In other words, "God through the merits of Christ, accepts him that believes as if he had already fulfilled all righteousness." Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28.
220. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 28.
221. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 454.
222. Ibid.
223. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 38.
224. Ibid., pp. 38, 105; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 249.
225. John Wesley, ed., The Arminian Magazine: Consisting of Extracts and Original Treatises on Universal Redemption 1779, vol. 2, p. 120.
226. Ibid., p. 121.
227. Ibid., p. 120.
228. Ibid., p. 122.
229. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 1, pp. 31, 32, 36.
230. Neither Gordon Rupp nor recently Alister McGrath argue for a "making righteous"; however, Karl Holl, Reinold Seeberg and Paul Althaus argue that his understanding of justification inseparably joined together both a "declaring righteous" and a "making righteous". Gordon Rupp, The Righteousness of God (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1953), pp. 182ff; Paul Althaus, The Theology of Martin Luther, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 235; McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 18, Cf. p. 101.
231. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 18.
232. Ibid., pp. 13, 18; Rupp, Righteousness of God, p. 184.
233. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 24.
234. Ibid., p. 105
235. Ibid., p. 37.
236. Ibid., p. 97.
237. Ibid., pp. 109f.
238. Justification is distinct from sanctification in that justification occurs through faith alone and not through works of man; yet, he also considers that they are identical insofar as "justification, considered as the efficacious divine just judgment, makes man really just or holy." Hans Küng, Justification: The Doctrine of Karl

Barth and a Catholic Reflection, With a letter from Karl Barth (London: Burns and Oates, 1964), p. 268.

239. Wesley, Sermons, ed. E. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 45.
240. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 101f.
241. He altered Thomas Cranmer's phrase in the Homily of Salvation, that one may not perform good works with the intent "to be made Just" by doing them, into: one may not do them with the intent "to be justified by doing them". Cf. extract in Albert Outler, ed., John Wesley, A Library of Protestant Thought, ed. board John Dillenberger, et. al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 126 with Cranmer's Homily in Homilies, Banks, p. 30.
- He had accepted Count Zinzendorf's proposition in July, 1738, that to "be justified is the same thing as to be born of God"; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 13.
- Nevertheless, in his Journal in August, 1738, he reported his conversation with Christian David in which Christian David contrasted "Christ given for us" and "Christ living in us", associating the latter with the renewal of the soul in the image of God; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 35.
242. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 275. Notwithstanding this, why did he let stand in the 1740 edition of his Journal Zinzendorf's assertion that to be justified was the same as to be born anew? In the 1743 edition, while leaving the assertion in, he showed his rejection of it with a parenthetic, "Not so." Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 35.
243. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 120.
244. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 431.
245. Ibid.
246. Ibid., p. 432.
247. Ibid., p. 431; Wesley, Sermons, ed. E. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 45; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 357; Wesley, Works, ed.- in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 187; vol. 3, p. 507.
248. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 187.
249. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 507.
250. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 160; vol. 3, pp. 204, 506f.
251. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 202.
252. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 204; Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 367.
253. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 225.
254. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol.3, p. 204, 507.
255. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 267.

256. Summarizing the contrast between the two distinct natures of justification and sanctification, John Wesley gave the following thumbnail sketch of 1748. Justification implied only a relative change, the new birth or sanctification a real change; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 431. In justifying us, God did something for us. He forgave our sins; Ibid., p. 432; vol. 2, p. 187. In begetting us again he did the work in us. He renewed our fallen nature; Ibid., vol. 1, p. 432; vol. 2, p. 187.

The former changed our outward relation to God so that as enemies we become children; "by the latter our inmost souls are changed, so that of sinners we become saints." Justification restored us to the favour of God but sanctification to the image of God. The former took away the guilt, and the latter took away the power and root of sin; Ibid., vol. 1, p. 432; vol. 3, p. 204.

257. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 384; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 458; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 272.
258. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, pp. 24, 105, 107f, 110; Heinrich Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics: Set Out and Illustrated From the Sources, rev. and ed. Ernst Bizer, foreward by Karl Barth, Eng. trans. G. T. Thomas (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1950), pp. 565-75.
259. Küng, Justification, pp. 268f.
260. McGrath, Iustitia, vol. 2, p. 103.

CHAPTER TWO

FAITH

WHO ARE JUSTIFIED? THE "UNGODLY"

The broad outline of the 1746 sermon "Justification by Faith" serves as a representative blueprint for John Wesley's scheme of justification by faith. Building upon its broadest outline, we move away with him now from justification as "objective" faith and attempt to stitch together his substantive formulations regarding "subjective" faith. According to John Wesley, the "objective" and "subjective" dimensions of justification were two weights absolutely necessary for a balanced, Scriptural experience and understanding of justification. Justifying faith was as necessary to justification as the "merits of Christ"; albeit, faith was only justification's condition, not the founding cause.

This "subjective" aspect of justification relates to the appropriation to the individual person of what Christ did and suffered. John Wesley's consideration of justification's "subjective" side may be introduced by his question: "Who are they that are justified?"¹ His answer, diametrically opposed to his pre-1738 "holy living" moral theology, was Scriptural but radical in the eighteenth century's Church of England context: God "justifieth the ungodly" (Romans 4:5). John Wesley stated he justified the ungodly of every kind and degree and none but the ungodly.² He said, "For it is not a saint, but a sinner that is forgiven"³ He claimed they were justified whose depravity was total; namely, those in whom no good thing is found, who have no Christian temper and no antecedent righteousness -- no, not so much as a negative righteousness or innocence -- till the moment God gave them faith.⁴ Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Because forgiveness immediately correlated to sin and nothing else, sin alone admitted of being forgiven. He stated, "It is our 'unrighteousness' to which the pardoning God is 'merciful'".⁵

That God justified the ungodly was the corollary to the proposition that the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ alone saved men. For if it was grace alone which saved man, then the state from which man was saved must be such that only grace was sufficient. John Wesley was presumably right in asserting that this proposition had been neglected by those - apparently the overwhelming majority of clerics in the Church of England - who accepted the contrary view which he himself once had maintained.

Though his enlightenment had come from outside the English church from the German Moravians, he found the same truth corroborated by the English Reformer Robert Barnes and, more particularly, by the Articles and Homilies which he forever triumphantly quoted against hostile churchmen.

Nevertheless, John Wesley's proclamation that the ungodly without good works were justified was little short of scurrilous. However complacent the age, its nerve could still be pinched at the prospect of the likes of John Wesley revivifying the inflammatory theological tenets which had ~~fueled~~ the previous century's internecine warfare. During the first twenty-five years of the Evangelical Awakening, he fielded repeated attacks against this proposition by such persons as vicars Thomas Church and John Downes, the enigmatic "John Smith", Dr. Henry Stebbing preacher of Gray's Inn, Bishops Lavington and Warburton, and the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, Dr. George Horne.⁶

The prevailing, peace-keeping, eighteenth century view of the condition of justification accepted that it was neither faith alone nor good works--but faith together with good works. John Wesley facetiously observed that this was how "many wise and learned men ... explain justification by faith".⁷ He confessed that he had once walked in this "new path" of salvation by faith and works.⁸

The dramatic alteration in his conception of faith's comprehension from that of a Catholic, moral theologian to that of a traditional Reformation

Protestant may be traced by comparing two editions of his sermon "Salvation by Faith". In June 1738, he claimed that faith "is necessarily inclusive of all good works and all holiness".⁹ Viewing this statement in light of his later more developed understanding, it was essentially the moral theologian Bishop Bull's own position. However, in a later edition of this sermon, his theological understanding of faith had become sophisticated enough to recognize the impropriety of this assertion. Indeed, his original statement could easily have been taken to mean that the faith which saved included good works and holiness within its parameters. That he intended to mean this is doubtful but open to question. Nonetheless, that he asserted this in 1738 says something about his then lack of clarity regarding faith. Later, he amended the statement to read that faith is "necessarily productive of all good works and all holiness".¹⁰

The 1738 rendition would seem to compare favourably with Hans Küng's thought. However, John Wesley's later position, while asserting a necessary relation between faith and good works, was an attempt to siphon off good works and holiness from faith alone which was the sole condition of justification.

His dialogue with Dr. George Horne is fascinating and instructive in this regard not only because here he threshed out with a notable academic the matter of justification by faith, but also because in locking horns with him he debated with a significant stream of English church thought which has traversed four centuries. Let us consider very briefly his interaction with George Horne who assumed George Bull's view of justification by faith and good works. George Horne's argument was heavily indebted to the post-Restoration divine Bishop George Bull's exposition of justification by faith. The Bishop's exposition came to have a profound influence, not only over the post-Restoration Caroline church, but also it seems over the eighteenth and the nineteenth century English church.¹¹

In a sermon in which George Horne alluded to the doctrine of "the new lights at the Tabernacle and Foundery", he argued as George Bull that faith which (and as far as it) justified, must necessarily be completed by true love.¹² Man could not be justified by faith alone. For faith, defined as reliance on gospel promises, must be founded on the consciousness of having performed the conditions. A reliance so founded was the result of works wrought through faith.¹³ John Wesley contested this by countering that this reliance was the result of works wrought without faith; or else the argument implied a contradiction. For, assuming faith to be a synonymous term for reliance, then George Horne's argument would proffer that reliance was the result of works wrought through such a reliance.¹⁴

Further, George Horne, fusing sanctification with justification, asserted that Christ required repentance, faith and its fruits for justification. John Wesley replied that St. Paul affirmed in Romans chapter four that "faith is counted for righteousness", not either repentance or its fruits. When Paul declared, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified," he was arguing that no person "can be justified by his own works". In saying this, he was excluding all the works of all humankind antecedent to justification.¹⁵

The point was that one could do nothing but sin till he was reconciled to God. Herein his doctrine of the total depravity of all persons expressed itself with its full force.¹⁶ Was not the one who before justification fed the hungry, clothed the naked, prayed, et cetera doing "good works"? John Wesley agreed with the Reformers these were "good works" in the sense that they were good and profitable to men. But they were not "good works" in themselves or in the sight of God.¹⁷ By definition "good works" must be works which follow justification. Quoting Article Twelve, he stated that "good works" "spring out of a true and living faith".¹⁸ He set up the following syllogism to argue logically the point: "No works are good which are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done." "But no works done before

justification are done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done." Amplifying this, he explained that as God wills our works to be done in love, then in order to be done in love they must be done with the love of the Father in us. This love of the Father is given us only when we receive the "Spirit of adoption".¹⁹ "Therefore no works done before justification are good," he concluded.

An ambiguity which resulted from this argument was not really addressed by him. If no "good works" precede justification, then the unjustified person who resists temptation and does not sin -- which must be God's will -- has not done a "good work". Moreover, the conclusion can be drawn that one who has resisted sin and done God's will has not by definition done what is good in God's sight. This was the Reformers' own paradoxical conclusion. Yet, one must conclude that John Wesley, accepting prevenient grace and wanting to avoid fatalism, accepted that such a resisting of sin is both a sin and not a sin and, presumably, both a "good work" and not a good work.

We must only lightly touch upon how his argument that no "good works" are possible before justification squared with his controversy with the Moravians in which he insisted that the unjustified must wait for justification by using the ordinances of God. The issue centered around the manner in which an unjustified person was to wait to receive the gift of faith. The Moravians, most particularly Philip Molther, (though Count Zinzendorf did not appear to be unsympathetic to the view), advised that the way to faith was to "wait for Christ" and to "be still" (hence called "stillness" or "quietism") and leave off using the "means of grace"; such as going to church, communicating, fasting, using private prayer or even reading the Scripture.²⁰ Philip Molther argued that unbelievers sought not to use the so-called "means of grace" because they "do not ordinarily convey God's grace to Unbelievers" -- Christ was the only means.²¹ Without faith, that is, full assurance, one was without Christ and therefore had no good. Therefore, if one was without Christ, then no matter what one did, one could do no good and nothing could be of help

to salvation. Furthermore, whatever one did without faith and Christ was sin.

On the contrary, John Wesley argued that the way to wait for Christ was not to wait passively but to wait by using all the "means of grace".²² Several observations elucidate the polemic. The Moravians were not without support from Martin Luther for their view. He noted in his lecture on Romans that when grace came upon the soul, there must not be prayer or action on our part but only a keeping still.²³ Moreover, Philip Molther, waving the ordinances, was only carrying out the teaching that whatever was not of faith was sin to its radical conclusion. As we have noted, John Wesley tried to maintain this conclusion while qualifying it.

Furthermore, the reason for their critical difference of opinion stems from their variant definitions of justifying faith. Philip Molther restricted justifying faith to a "full assurance of faith" in which there was a clear perception of Christ's indwelling consisting in all joy and no doubt.²⁴ On the other hand, John Wesley allowed that justifying faith was a faith short of "full assurance" with some joy and some doubt.²⁵ Therefore, when they argued about who was eligible for communion, the person the Moravian considered unjustified and ineligible was by John Wesley's definition justified and eligible.

John Wesley was not advocating what the rubrics of the Church outlawed: admitting the unbelieving, unrepentant sinner to the Lord's table.²⁶ Basically, when he spoke of communion as a "converting ordinance", he meant that it could be the means of giving the believer with a degree of faith in his "weak" sense the "full assurance of faith" in the Moravian sense.²⁷ Those who know their state of "utter sinfulness and helplessness" and who "know and feel that they want the grace of God" were fit to communicate.²⁸ The Moravians also publicly agreed in 1740 that they did not at all despise the poor, humiliated sinner seeking grace (probably the person John Wesley considered "weak" in faith) to come to communion.²⁹

Some of the Moravians carried an instinctive Reformation wariness which equated using the ordinances (even for the believer) with trusting in them. It

smacked of man co-operating with God for salvation.³⁰ John Wesley, still with an untempered high Church bent, seems to have viewed the ordinances not as acts which merited God's grace as in the Roman Catholic idea of meritum de condigno, but channels through which God bestowed grace. Nonetheless, the Moravians perhaps perceived in the High Churchman an over zealous and defensive attachment to the ordinances which was uncharacteristic of the evangelical Protestantism with which they were familiar. Later, in 1746, when the smoke began to clear, John Wesley could warn against saying, "I must do something before I come to Christ".³¹

WHO ARE JUSTIFIED? THE GUILTY "UNGODLY"

After establishing that the "ungodly" were ~~those~~ who were justified, he further defined who these "ungodly" were that were justified. The ungodly were the guilty who were not only condemned by God but also by their own consciences. While all ungodly persons were candidates for justification, only the one who was convicted of his ungodliness might be justified. Justifying faith presupposed "a sense of sin", a sense of inner "conviction" of the guilt and power of sin within the ungodly.³²

This "convincing us of sin" was a work performed by the Holy Spirit who removed the veil and pricked us in the heart, convincing the unrighteous of our evil nature, temper, actions, and words.³³ He brought the sinner to awareness of the full sense of his ungodliness -- his utter inability to think, speak or do good, and "his absolute meetness for hell-fire".³⁴ Simultaneously with this work, the Spirit convinced the ungodly of the desert of our sins, so that we "receive the spirit of bondage unto fear", the fear of the wrath of God, the fear of punishment and death which we deserve.³⁵

Faith implied that a person first renounce himself in this manner, totally rejecting all "confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3,4) and abandoning all trust in his own works or righteousness of any kind.³⁶ When a man stands thus before God, he can then, in a popular expression of the Awakening,

"Look unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2).³⁷ When he had full conviction of his inability either to remove the power or atone for the guilt of sin, he was in the gate of Christian blessedness.³⁸ Encapsulating it, he exhorted, "Go as altogether ungodly, guilty, lost, destroyed, deserving and dropping into hell, and thou shalt then find favour in his sight".³⁹

How did natural ungodly man become "convinced of sin"? In 1746, John Wesley answered, "By some awful providence, or by his Word applied with the demonstration of his Spirit, God touches the heart"⁴⁰ More specifically, this ordinarily meant that the Son of God convicted sinners by the law.⁴¹ Just as Martin Luther consistently urged the preaching of the law in order to humiliate and awaken penitence, so did John Wesley.⁴² The "schoolmaster's" first use was to slay the sinner and destroy the life and strength wherein he trusted.⁴³ By means of the law he is "convinced of sin" and brought "under the law", receiving the "spirit of bondage unto fear".⁴⁴ The natural man brought "under the law" begins to perceive the "inward, spiritual meaning of the law of God." The guilty ungodly is convinced that the law not only related to outward sin but also to the secret recesses of his soul. At every point he sees and feels his sin such that he sees he is "all sin", and "altogether corrupt and abominable".⁴⁵ This convicted person, though desiring and striving to break loose from sin, feels his grievous chains even more.⁴⁶

For John Wesley, this conviction brought by the law implied a "species" of faith which if one may so describe it was the twilight straddling the darkness of unbelief and the light of justifying faith. In 1788, he called this specie of faith the "faith of a servant." What was revealed to one "under conviction" was the evidence of things which could not be seen until God revealed them.⁴⁷

How did this description of the conviction of sin, which played such a prominent role in Methodist theology and was in such evidence in the groaning and shrieking at the outdoor gatherings, relate to other understandings of the pre-justification condition? As far as the standard Roman Catholic understanding goes, John Wesley's conception roughly

paralleled one of the three parts of the sacrament of penance, namely, contrition.⁴⁸ Protestants had long ago dropped the other two parts, auricular confession and satisfaction. While his description of the person "under conviction" typically related to the unsaved person, the Roman Catholic conception usually related to the baptized person who once had sanctifying grace. Martin Luther was ambiguous in his teaching regarding penitence (poenitentiae).⁴⁹ He seemed to affirm two contrary things at different times, that true penitence began with the fear and judgment of God, and later avowed that initial penitence sprang from faith and love.⁵⁰ Albrecht Ritschl stated that A. H. Francke and the Gotha Pietists were the first to insist on contrition, the "conflict of penitence" (Busskampf), as a precondition of living faith.⁵¹ Similarly, Richard Baxter's Aphorismes maintained that "Conviction" and "godly Sorrow" were antecedent to believing.⁵²

The experience of the hatefulness and loathesomeness of all sin which preceded faith as particularly described by Pietist and Puritan appeared in John Wesley. Moravian testimonies which John Wesley recorded in his Journal were by no means dissimilar to John Wesley's own pre-faith experience struggle, though Count Zinzendorf did not concede the universal necessity of a painful struggle of repentance prior to or after faith. An inner "feeling" of inner, sinful corruption, the lack of the knowledge and love of God, misery, darkness, fear of God's wrath and lack of peace prior to justification were featured in these accounts.⁵³

Rudolf Bultmann rejects the notion of a pre-faith, agonizing struggle of repentance in which one has an "oppressive consciousness of sin".⁵⁴ In teaching that only the individual of faith had an existentiell self-understanding of his sinful state, Rudolf Bultmann's view was harmonious with Martin Luther's view that penitence sprang from faith.

Perhaps the experience of being "under conviction" in Methodism came to be expressed in stylized form; nevertheless, its signification referred to a particular kind of individual experience to which Catholics and Protestants

both seemed to bear testimony.

At any rate, they who may be justified are the "ungodly" whose hearts are convinced of their utter lostness, sinfulness and complete inability to work for their own righteousness. On what terms were these ungodly persons who were under the conviction of sin justified? Resoundingly he proclaimed throughout his life, "Faith alone therefore justifies."⁵⁵ One would not be justified by "having your own righteousness, which is of the law", by baptism, by good works, by outward religion, or even by repentance.⁵⁶ He declared "faith alone" in 1738, before the congregation in St. Mary's the University Church; he enunciated it to Thomas Church in 1745; to Dr George Horne in 1762; and before the mourners at George Whitefield's memorial service in 1771 -- as well as to many others in between these dates and after.⁵⁷

WHAT FAITH IS NOT

Before defining the faith whereby persons were saved, John Wesley set forth what saving faith was not. In so doing, he cut against the grain of the common eighteenth century understanding of saving faith which more times than not was typified by the "holy living" analysis of Jeremy Taylor and George Bull. Firstly, he denied the proposition that the faith which justified encompassed and included in itself works. Faith was not synonymous with the "good life", he insisted to George Horne. George Horne asseverated in St. Mary's to the University that the faith which Paul attributed to justification was faith "which worketh by love". Citing several texts to prove his point, he capped his argument by referring to 1 Corinthians 13:13 where Paul showed faith "disjoined from Charity, or love, maketh it to be of no value"⁵⁸ This was harmonious with his mentor George Bull who explained that faith which justified must necessarily be rendered complete by true love.⁵⁹ Ironically, the expression which represented Bishop Bull's analysis of faith, "faith which worketh by love", became John Wesley's encapsulated refrain for the scheme of salvation.⁶⁰

Though Bristol's Bishop Joseph Butler asserted "our faith itself is a good work; it is a virtuous temper of mind", John Wesley disputed it.⁶¹ John Wesley also repudiated the notion which marked the rational proclivity of Enlightenment theology that faith was a simple, rational assent to a proposition or a theological "opinion". In fairness to many who entertained this, the rational assent was not just a barren assent but an assent conjoined with praxis. In addition to those already mentioned above, churchman "John Smith" called faith "rational assent and moral virtue". According to him, ascent and moral practice must be logically and temporally synchronous.⁶²

In a 1748 sermon, John Wesley affirmed that the apostle John's statement "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1) was not speaking of "a barely notional or speculative faith".⁶³ Faith was not "a bare assent to this proposition, 'Jesus is the Christ'" , nor to all propositions.⁶⁴ Neither was faith the opinion itself or a "system of opinions" however true or scriptural.⁶⁵ Faith, he said, was not a "speculative, rational thing, a cold, lifeless assent, a train of ideas in the head".⁶⁶ In summary, faith was not simply "notional"; namely, a mental agreement that a certain statement was true.

Neither for John Wesley was faith merely "an evidence and conviction of such or such truths".⁶⁷ For instance, it was not the faith of a heathen who believed certain things about God such "that God is; that He rewards those who seek Him".⁶⁸ Moreover, appropriating the thought from the Homilies, he stated that faith was not the "faith of a devil" who believed even more than the heathen; for a devil believed that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Saviour of the world.⁶⁹ In 1763, Richard Hart insisted that being convinced of the reality that Jesus is the Christ alone was enough to be called faith. John Wesley retorted that it was not enough, for so had he once believed.⁷⁰ Moreover, he assured Thomas Church that the devils believed the Anglican Articles.⁷¹ No, even if the Roman Catholics believed more than was revealed in the Old and New Testament and the Protestants just what had been

declared, the embracing of certain truths was insufficient faith.⁷²

Lastly, faith through which persons were saved was not simply the faith the apostles had while Christ was on earth; nor, one might add, the faith with which John Wesley flirted while sailing back and forth to England. It was not so-called "miraculous" faith which the apostles exercised in order to work miracles, to heal, and to do mighty works.⁷³

From his comments on what faith was not, John Wesley demonstrated he was somewhat of an anachronism of the prevailing spirit of his age. He vigorously revolted against the age's reductionism of faith to credal recital and moral virtue and practice. The eighteenth century's religious thinking, influenced by the likes of John Tillotson and John Locke, sought to bring theology down from the divisive regions of theological speculation to the reasonable sphere of practical Christian morality whose truth was believed to be vindicated by reason and verified by its harmony with creation's moral order. While at Oxford, John Wesley did not escape such an understanding being warned by his mother to avoid a solely mental concept of faith which excluded practice.

Similar to Philip Spener's, August Francke's and German Pietism's criticism of the tepid, formal, rational orthodoxy of seventeenth century Lutheranism, John Wesley protested against a prevailing conception of faith which was confined to the "head". He was utterly impatient with what seemed to him his age's complacent "almost Christian" whose faith went little further than cerebral, credal concurrence. He reacted against the trifling with faith which had "a form of godliness" but not its power.⁷⁴ Maybe they found the "head" but they fell short of the soul and heart. As early as his reading of Thomas à Kempis and Jeremy Taylor in 1725, he became impassioned with the new understanding that religion must first be kindled in the interior man.⁷⁵ After discovering true faith, he knew true faith was felt in the inner man. Therefore, as a result, no aspect of his existence would be unaffected or uninvolved.

John Wesley's complaint against the overly rationalistic tone of the religion of his day was not dissimilar to other complaints in other ages; for example, Friedrich Schleiermacher's and Søren Kierkegaard's in the nineteenth century and, in the twentieth century, Wilhelm Herrmann and, more to our point, Rudolf Bultmann. Here we discover a significant point of contact between John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann. Like his mentor Wilhelm Herrmann, Rudolf Bultmann rejected the identification of authentic Christianity with doctrinal confession and protested against the rational orthodoxy in the German Protestant church.⁷⁶ He said only faith's radical self-surrender and resolve of the will to accept the saving proclamation of grace in Jesus Christ could effect the utter reversal of man's previous sinful state. Simple assent to assertions left one as a neutral observer to a salvation whose realization came only through faith.

Both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann asserted that true faith was a matter of one's whole existence and not simply the intellect. Moreover, for both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann, faith as assent was unacceptable for salvation because it construed faith to be a human work, something which man performed and was required of him for salvation.

FAITH AS "ASSENT"

Proceeding from John Wesley's understanding of what faith was not, we will set forth his understanding of what faith was. Although as we have stated he was certain that assent to divine truth was not saving faith, nonetheless, he, in the tradition of the Homilies, consciously presupposed and included "assent" as a prior aspect of "true, living, Christian faith". He stated that faith was "not only an assent, an act of the understanding ..." , "not only a belief of all the articles of our faith... but ...".⁷⁷ The point was that the "living faith" took in, might not exclude, and could co-exist with prior "assent". When he asserted that faith was not assent he meant to say "assent" alone was in and of itself insufficient for salvation and, therefore, "dead faith". But

united with trust in the merits of Christ it was "living faith".

Did this make assent to propositions a human work and a human pre-condition to faith and salvation? Was assent to doctrinal propositions an absolutely necessary pre-condition to "living faith" and, therefore, to salvation? He gave a flexible answer to this issue. Firstly, he did not assert that assent to articles of faith or to Scriptural affirmations were absolutely necessary to "living faith" and salvation in every case. He claimed he dare not affirm the contention of some that regardless of the inner change which occurred in someone's heart, unless he had clear ideas or conceptions of the capital doctrines, he could not benefit from Christ's death. He declared epigrammatically, "I believe he (the merciful God) respects the goodness of the heart, rather than the clearness of the head".⁷⁸

Interestingly, Bishop Warburton accused him of separating "reason from grace" and argued that "in the first propagation of religion God began with the understanding, and rational conviction won the heart".⁷⁹ John Wesley gave qualified agreement. Frequently it was true, but, more generally, God began his work in the heart. For example, the jailor who in Acts chapter sixteen had his heart touched cried "What must I do to be saved?" before he understood the way of salvation. He went on to say that persons "usually feel desires to please God before they know how to please Him."⁸⁰ People were first convinced in the heart by a desire to please God independently of the mind. Persons were saved from their sins who could not give even a simple, rational account of the plainest principles of religion.

In affirming that persons did not necessarily need a rational understanding of the principles of religion for salvation, John Wesley was not categorically disavowing the mind a role in salvation or arguing for a circumvention of theological propositions and doctrines. Rudolf Bultmann was later to argue that to require "assent" prior to faith was to require "two acts of faith" and, therefore, it was a "work" and a sin. His concern was not for those with dull understanding but for those learned persons who by assent

would, by his reckoning, be forced to sacrifice their intellect to incredible proposals.

Rudolf Bultmann distinguished saving faith from a "work" by affirming that faith was unique in that it was the only decision which was not made on the basis of prior premises. Rather, all prior considerations are called into question and "uprooted" by faith. Saving faith could only be saving faith in the abandonment of all prior considerations of all security (in which having an "evidence" would consist).⁸¹ Therefore, to believe on the "evidence" of "things not seen" could only be a purposeful act of man and a "work". John Wesley would retort that it was not a "work" because it was effected by the Holy Spirit without the assistance of man. Rudolf Bultmann would likely reply that it could not be the work of God because God did not work in this way.

John Wesley's argument accepted that God cast his net widely. Albeit, God could work salvation in persons of varying intellectual ability, in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley was particularly predisposed to those dimmer or undeveloped faculties *which* had no prior exposure to Christian truth or Christian catechism. Arguing in this way, he attempted to avoid making "assent" a human effort -- one which might favor certain persons over others -- which was a prior condition to faith and salvation. This brought a counterbalance to the error of an age which identified rational knowledge and acceptance of Christian doctrine with salvation.

Rudolf Bultmann eschewed assent prior to faith not only because such affirmations of propositional doctrine led man to trust in his own understanding but also because it was deemed to force upon him intellectual suicide. John Wesley reacted against formal assent because in it man would - by relying on and resting in his own reason - cease to seek for God. Therefore, he would never discover the deep supra-empirical realities that God was waiting to reveal to him.

Ironically, though Rudolf Bultmann maintained that the decision of faith must occur apart and prior to rational premises, arguably it pre-supposed a

hidden rationalism which dictated, at least, what faith could not be. On the other hand, while John Wesley ostensibly encouraged reason to play its part in faith, it was a qualified "reason" he had in mind, one enlightened by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit which, some critics would argue, was simply natural reason yielding to subjective, if not irrational, inner experience.

John Wesley showed versatility in his stance toward reason's role in faith. Not only would he agree with Rudolf Bultmann that reason dealt with theological affirmations after faith, he also allowed that reason could be very useful prior to salvation. Herein he distinguished himself from Rudolf Bultmann's denial of such. He accepted that reason could direct persons "in every point both of faith and practice".⁸² Reason aided persons in understanding the "foundation of true religion" which stood on the Scriptures.⁸³ Some, himself to some extent, were convinced and acknowledged "the truth as it is in Jesus" before their hearts were influenced. But rational conviction was neither faith nor could it produce saving faith. It could present the image but not the reality to which the image corresponded.⁸⁴ What did this mean for those who had serious intellectual qualms with seemingly implausible, Christian tenets? Did rational doubts and rejection of rational doctrines affect the reception of justification? Could John Wesley avoid a subjectivity in which faith was nothing more than anybody's interpretation of their inner experience?

Answers to these questions must take into consideration John Wesley's assumptions. He drew a crucial distinction between theological doctrines and theological realities.⁸⁵ The somewhat relative theological doctrines contrasted with the existent, eternal realities to which they referred. The theological realities were in their nature ultimate, unchanging verities of God which existed "objectively" in a supra-empirical metaphysical realm, God's heavenly sphere. The rational doctrines were representations and portraits which corresponded, whether more or less accurately and clearly, to these transcendent realities of God. Because of their ^{ORIGIN,} ~~SUPERNATURAL~~ these realities

were encountered through God-given and God-activated spiritual sensors within the soul of man. In any case, whatever variations may occur in the rational doctrines, these supra-sensual realities were just that, actual reality.

Assuming this, John Wesley asserted that these essential realities were self-evident and clearly attested to and revealed in Scripture. Moreover, in contrast to doctrines, the Scriptural statements and promises bore a literal and perfect correspondence to the supra-empirical reality which they signified.⁸⁶ They themselves were not essentially explanations deriving from man, but were divine pronouncements issuing from the provenance of God. Children of God could rely upon the Scriptures to faithfully represent the ultimate verities of God which were essential to salvation. God would not allow it to be otherwise.⁸⁷

Therefore, one could not really justify the rejection of Scriptural assertions. In fact, whereas rational consent to theological doctrines did not save, conscious denial of the objective, super-empirical, essential realities prior to justifying faith could impede the further reception of saving faith.⁸⁸ Even if "assent" did not save, he did not attempt to withstand the implication that in order to put oneself in the range of salvation, an acceptance, or at least a non-rejection of the Scriptural testimony to God's supernatural, essential realities, must to some extent be presupposed (however basically and simply) in order to receive justification.⁸⁹

THE DEFINITION OF FAITH IN GENERAL

This leads us into John Wesley's consideration of the general definition of "faith". In general, faith as defined by the apostle was "a divine, supernatural ἔλεγχος 'evidence' or conviction of things not seen".⁹⁰ Introduced to this definition presumably by August Spangenberg, it was extracted directly from Hebrews 11:1 which was assumed to be written "by the Apostle" Paul.⁹¹

According to John Wesley, the text testified to the reality of an invisible and eternal world hidden, unseen, and undiscoverable by the physical senses

and natural faculties, such as unaided reason.⁹² Denying a prior knowledge and accepting the Lockean assumption that all man's knowledge was derived from the natural senses -- feeling, taste, smell, hearing, sight -- he proposed axiomatically that no natural sense could reach beyond the bounds of the visible sphere of natural phenomena (God, though invisible, could reveal Himself to the physical senses).⁹³ The physical senses furnished information about the material world but no information at all concerning the invisible world.⁹⁴ Not even reason could give a clear satisfactory evidence of the invisible world.⁹⁵

Admittedly, heathens had a small degree of light. From such sources as the heavens and the creation, they inferred there was a God powerful and wise, just and merciful who rewarded those who sought him.⁹⁶ Faith was "the grand desideratum" because it could do what no natural sense could do: it could transcend the great gulf and give evidence of things which were not seen now, whether visible or invisible (God was both) in their own nature, whether either past, future, or spiritual.⁹⁷ Moreover, faith gave evidence of the things God had revealed in His Word.⁹⁸ Faith implied two things: (1) the perceptive faculty itself (2) the act of perceiving God and the things of God.⁹⁹ Expressed differently, faith implied "a kind of spiritual light exhibited to the soul, and a supernatural sight or perception thereof".¹⁰⁰ The Apostle also envisaged this operation as "the eyes of" our "understanding being opened".¹⁰¹ As a result of the Holy Spirit both opening and enlightening "the eyes of our soul", one was enabled to see and understand God's invisible things which the natural eye had neither seen nor heard.¹⁰²

Indeed, that rational, mental affirmation of New Testament statements required supernatural faith seemed to be a truism to John Wesley.¹⁰³ The devils, who one could conclude had this supra-empirical faith, believed that Christ was born of a virgin, that he wrought many miracles and declared himself to be God.¹⁰⁴ However, "faith" was distinguished from "living faith" in that if it "bringeth not forth repentance" it was not a "right living faith" but "a

dead and devilish one".¹⁰⁵

John Wesley's understanding of the nature of faith's rational assent to Scriptural truth could well be indebted to John Pearson's analysis.¹⁰⁶ A brief synopsis relevant to the discussion at hand is given in the endnote.¹⁰⁷ However, he seems to differentiate himself from the Bishop in his conception of the nature of the authority which persuades one to assent. Bishop Pearson argues on a rational basis that one is moved to assent to divine things when one considers the grounds upon which the testimony is based: God the Testifier's authority, His omnipotent ability and His perfect integrity. John Wesley, though not appearing to disagree with the Bishop as far as he goes, enlivens his formulation by declaring that one assents to the Scriptural truths through the testimony of God which, more than the "dead letter" of Scripture, is the supernatural evidence of the unseen Scriptural things communicated to the soul, thereupon inspiring the reason through the Holy Spirit.

The supernatural working of the Holy Spirit in enlightening the understanding and reasoning about Scriptural and spiritual things is crucial to and cannot be neglected in understanding John Wesley's conception of faith. To form true premises of the things of God, one must be accurately informed about them. Since unaided reason and sense cannot penetrate behind the veil into the invisible, only the supernatural sense born of that supernatural world can accurately reveal this world. Only the supernatural power wrought by the Almighty can enlighten reason and give it the ability to discern and explore "those things which with eyes of flesh and blood no man hath seen or can see".¹⁰⁸

In regard to the question of how one could truly apprehend and "assent" to Scriptural affirmations prior to faith, we see that the answer is both/and: one could not assent prior to faith; yet, one could assent prior to faith. The apparent paradox is removed when one realizes that John Wesley consistently taught the reality of "degrees" of faith.¹⁰⁹ We shall discuss this subject in relation to "faith in particular" and assurance. Suffice it to say, he asserted

that there were gradations of faith from the weak faith of "little children" to that of "fathers".¹¹⁰ We have already demonstrated that he accepted that the person "under conviction" had a species of faith. This faith-in-general which we have been discussing is the faith which was given before justifying faith and is concurrent with the state of conviction. Thus, through general faith prior to justifying faith one could be given at least a simple understanding of the supernatural reality upon which one was to believe.

For Rudolf Bultmann, the very assumption that God could reveal to unjustified man transcendent reality upon which he must rely was to argue "according to the flesh". There was no such objective truth with a fixed meaning which corresponded to the words of Scripture that existed apart from saving faith. The meaning of the proclamation of the New Testament only arose in faith. While, as we have said, John Wesley acknowledged that the truth of the Scriptures was revealed to enlightened reason in general faith, he presupposed that its content and meaning existed supernaturally and eternally, albeit hidden and invisible, irrespective of man. While Rudolf Bultmann's argument was supported by the relinquishing of any presumption of an eternally existent, transcendent, personal God, John Wesley's was made defensible by the assumption of such.

John Wesley was not out of line with historic Christian thought in allowing a proper role to "assent".¹¹¹ His stress upon the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit which brought about a spiritual sight by an inner sense, "the eye of faith", ranks him among seventeenth century Puritans who distinguished themselves by a similar emphasis.¹¹²

1. John Wesley, The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, Vol. 1: Sermons I: 1-33, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), p. 190.
2. Ibid., pp. 190, 196, 214.
3. Ibid., p. 191.
4. Ibid., pp. 192, 196. He stated no child of Adam ever was, or ever will be good enough to merit acceptance at God's hands. There dwells in us no good thing; see, Ibid., p. 214.
5. Ibid., pp. 190f.
6. He flatly contested Thomas Church's contentions in 1745 which bemoaned his "denying the necessity of good works as the condition of justification..."; see, John Wesley, The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.: Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, ed. John Telford, 8 vols. (London: Epworth Press, 1960), vol. 2, pp. 193f. He explained to Dr. Henry Stebbing that even though a man may truly claim he was chaste, sober, just in his dealings, one who helped his neighbor and used the ordinances of God, without "living faith", he could not think well of his state; see, John Wesley, The Journal of The Rev. John Wesley, A.M.: Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, Enlarged from Original Manuscripts, with Notes from Unpublished Diaries, Annotations, Maps, and Illustrations, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, 8 vols. (London: Epworth Press, A Bicentenary Issue 1938), vol. 2, p. 250. On the evidence of the Eleventh and Twelfth Articles and the Homilies he averred to Bishop Lavington of Exeter that the condition of justification was faith alone and not good works. The Bishop reproved him for undermining "morality and good works"; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 321.
7. John Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 190.
8. John Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 190.
9. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 125.
10. Ibid.
11. John Wesley himself also read Bishop Bull's Harmonica Apostolica in 1741. Bishop Bull's authority may be judged from John Wesley's ironical comment to George Horne that the authority of the Church ought to weigh more than Bishop Bull's. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p.175.

Bishop Bull was one of the two pillars upon which John Henry Newman of the Oxford Movement constructed a via media doctrine of justification; See, Alister E. McGrath, Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), Vol. 2: From 1500 to the Present, pp. 109f.
12. George Bull, Harmonia Apostolica; Or Two Dissertations; In the Former of Which The Doctrine of St. James on Justification by Works is Explained and Defended: In the Latter, The Agreement of St. Paul with St. James is Clearly Shewn (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1842), p. 26; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 176.

13. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 176.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 177. As he stated in 1746, the person who desired forgiveness did not have first to conquer every sin, break off every evil word and work, do good to all men; he did not have to be baptized, receive the Lord's Supper, pray, deny or mortify himself or feed the hungry and clothe the naked. To do this was "seeking to establish thy own righteousness". Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 214, 192; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 36, 109.
16. Although, as we have pointed out, John Wesley taught that the unbelieving, completely unrighteous sinner could, with the aid of prevenient grace, refrain from an individual sin, he nevertheless asserted concomitantly that man was in bondage to sin until he received forgiveness in Jesus Christ.
17. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 192.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., p. 193.
20. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 329.
21. Ibid., pp. 329, 344.
22. Ibid., p. 330.
23. Martin Luther, Luther: Lectures on Romans, newly trans. and ed. by Wilhelm Pauck, The Library of Christian Classics, Vol. 15, John Baillie, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. Van Dusen, gen. eds., 26 vols., p. 244.
24. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 328.
25. Ibid., pp. 328f.
26. Cf. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 79; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 361f; Joseph Ketley, ed. for The Parker Society, The Two Liturgies, A.D. 1549, and A.D. 1552; With Other Documents Set Forth by Authority in the Reign of King Edward VI. viz The Order of Communion 1548. The Primer, 1553. The Catechism and Articles, 1553. Catechismus Brevis, 1553 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1844), pp. 79f; Sermons, or Homilies, Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory. To Which are Added, The Articles of Religion (London: Printed for the Prayer-Book and Homily Society, 1824), p. 630.
27. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 360f.
28. Ibid., p. 362.
29. John Wesley, The Oxford Edition of The Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, Vol. 26: Letters II: 1740-1755, ed. Frank Baker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 37.

30. See, J. Taylor Hamilton and Kenneth G. Hamilton, History of the Moravian Church: The Renewed Unitas Fratrum 1722 - 1957 (Bethlehem, Pa., Inter-provincial Board of Christian Education Moravian Church in America, 1967), p. 80.
31. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol.1, pp. 215f.
32. Ibid., p. 419; Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 222.
33. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 235; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 161, 191.
34. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 196.
35. Souls thus convinced felt themselves at once altogether sinful, altogether guilty, and altogether helpless; Wesley, Works, vol. 7, p. 235.
36. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol.1, p. 419; Wesley, Sermons vol. 1, p. 49. This "sense of sin", he says in an aside, is what the world calls "despair"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 419; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 279.
37. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 198.
38. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 279.
39. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 198.
40. Ibid., p. 255.
41. Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), p. 15.
42. Reinhold Seeberg, Text-Book of the History of Doctrines, trans. Charles E. Hay, complete in two volumes (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Book House, 1958), vol. 2, p. 250; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 11, pp. 486f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 22ff.
43. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 16.
44. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 255.
45. Ibid., pp. 255f.
46. Ibid., p. 258. In connection with the law's role, John Wesley differs from both Martin Luther and Rudolf Bultmann in holding that the person prior to justification is given insight into the spiritual meaning of the law. The struggle characterized by Paul in Romans, "I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" is accepted by all three. However, for Martin Luther and Rudolf Bultmann the inner meaning of the law is only the preserve of the one already with faith; Martin Luther, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, trans. J. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Kregel Publications, 1977), pp. 115f. John Wesley does not deny that faith is necessary for this spiritual illumination, albeit it is only a "degree" of faith.

47. Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 235f. But what was the status or state of such a person? This ambiguous state was analyzed differently receiving various verdicts at various times from his controversy with the Moravians to the end of his life. In a 1768 letter to James Morgan, John Wesley reaffirmed that Methodist doctrine taught that a penitent mourned and was pained because he felt he was "not in the favour of God", having a sense of guilt upon his conscience; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, pp. 103f. However, in 1788, he described this "faith of a servant" as implying one who "feareth God, and worketh righteousness" who in consequence was "in a degree ... 'accepted with Him'"; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 235f. Moreover, he settled on the view that this person would not die till God brought him into full faith. We will investigate this more thoroughly later under the aegis "Faith in Particular".
48. John F. Clarkson, John H. Edwards, William J. Kelly, and John J. Welch, The Church Teaches, pp. 308f, 315.
49. Seeberg, History of Doctrine, vol. 2, pp. 245f; Conversation with E. Gordon Rupp. Cambridge, September 22, 1986.
50. Man was brought to this humiliation and knowledge of himself through the law before he came to faith; Seeberg, History of Doctrines, vol. 2, pp. 249f, 239, 250; E. Gordon Rupp, The Righteousness of God, pp. 118f.
51. Albrecht Ritschl, The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation: The Positive Development of The Doctrine, English Translation eds. H.R. Mackintosh, A.B. Macaulay (Clifton, New Jersey: Reference Book Publishers, 1966), p. 162.
52. Wesley, ed., Aphorisms, p. 28.
53. Hamilton and Hamilton, History of the Moravian Church, p. 155; Wesley, Journal, vol. 1, pp. 454f; vol. 2, pp. 28-49. Peter Böhler referred to John Wesley on April 23, 1738 as "a poor sinner" who had "a contrite heart". J. P. Lockwood, Memorials of The Life of Peter Böhler Bishop of The Church of The United Brethren, intro. by Thomas Jackson (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1868), p. 80. Albrecht Ritschl decried this kind of "monkish self-humiliation" and seems to assume that it was a studied method to be applied. Granted, the widespread use among Continental Pietists and the English Catholic and Reformed of such books as Thomas à Kempis' The Imitation of Christ promoted a case for the seriousness of sin and man's need of self-renunciation. However, one must also consider the sense of conviction which Pietists, Puritans, and Methodists experienced could not simply be attributed to the self-conscious application of a particular method or to auto-suggestion. Their experiences of conviction not infrequently occurred spontaneously and independently of a single determining influence and in isolation from one another in thought, time and place.
54. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays: Philosophical and Theological, trans. James C. G. Greig, The Library of Philosophy and Theology (London: SCM Press, 1955), pp. 39f.
55. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 188.

56. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 262; vol. 2, p. 188; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 107; vol. 2, p. 342; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 289.
57. Wesley, Sermons, ed. Sugden, vol. 1, p. 49; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 188; vol. 4, p. 175; Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 342; See Also Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 321; vol. 1, p. 254; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 296, 326; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 279; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 196.
58. George Horne, Sixteen Sermons on Various Subjects and Occasions, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Printed for J. Cooke; et al, 1795), pp. 88f.
59. Bull, Harmonia Apostolica, p. 26.
60. Bishop Bull's use of it could have conceivably inspired him. The expression does not appear to be used in the extract of Richard Baxter's Aphorismes.
61. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 256f Footnote. However, in 1745 he did grant moral virtue was an aspect of faith in the sense that hope and charity were. Nonetheless, it was something supernaturally given not earned; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 46.
62. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 46.
63. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 418.
64. Ibid.
65. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 263.
66. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 9.
67. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 496.
68. Wesley, Sermons, ed. E. Sugden, p. 38; Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 361; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 119; Besides a reference to Scripture, this may be an allusion to John Tillotson's proclamation that the two fundamental principles of religion were "there is a God" and "He will reward those that serve Him." John Tillotson, The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson. With the Life of the Author by Thomas Birch, Compiled by Thomas Birch, 3 vols. (London: J. & R. Tonson and S. Draper et al., 1752), vol. 1, p. 314.
69. See, "The Third Part of The Sermon of Salvation", Homilies, part 1, p.38. Wesley, Sermons, ed. E. Sugden, p. 39; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 119, 230.
70. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 219.
71. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 269.
72. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, pp. 496f.
73. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 120.

74. Ibid., pp. 138f.
75. Perfected intentions must precede perfect actions. What his newly opened eyes saw in 1725 old age never dimmed: "true religion was seated in the heart." Wesley, Journal, vol. 1, pp. 466f; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 5, pp. 432f.
76. Wilhelm Herrmann, The Communion of the Christian with God: Described on the Basis of Luther's Statements, trans. J. Sandys Stanyon, 2nd English ed., rev. R. W. Stewart (London: Williams and Norgate, 1906), pp. 2-5.
77. Wesley, Works, pp. 418f. This latter phrase was adapted from "The Third Part of the Sermon of Salvation", Homilies, Banks, p. 38; Letters, vol. 2, pp. 318f. Consciously implied in the phrase, this "living faith" was "not only 'an assent of divine truth upon the testimony of God', or 'upon the evidence of miracles'", but was a presupposition of "assent" in "living faith"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 418.
78. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 353f.
79. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, pp. 346f, 349.
80. Ibid., p. 348; Thomas, "John Wesley's Understanding of the Distinction Between Theological Essentials and Opinions", p. 65.
81. Bultmann, Essays, trans. James C. G. Greig, The Library of Philosophy and Theology (London: SCM Press, 1955), p. 180.
82. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 6, p. 360.
83. Ibid., p. 354.
84. Ibid., pp. 358ff.
85. Thomas, "John Wesley's Understanding of the Distinction Between Theological Essentials and Opinions", p. 60. There was a difference between how one accounted for a fact and the fact itself; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 270. Rational, theological doctrines, whether capital or peripheral, embodied 'a person's ideas expressed in their own language; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 454. Their ideas (their mental apprehension or the conception of something in the mind) may be indistinct and their expressions of these ideas may vary from person to person.
86. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 383.
87. His children are "taught of God"; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 6, p. 3. Moreover, He was the faithful and true witness who guarantees that the correlation between Scripture and the realities to which it points is perfect. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 418.
88. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 328, 183, 203; vol. 4, p. 348; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 6, pp. 205f.

89. He was not unfamiliar with those who claimed reason would not let them accept the oracles of God. However, natural reason's reluctance to believe was no excuse. To those who did not resist God, God would give the "evidence" and enlightenment of the invisible and eternal world. By Rudolf Bultmann's reckoning, even the consideration of a God who would reveal such mythologies was in itself a thought derived from a sinful, natural understanding and obviously not one from the understanding of faith. By John Wesley's accounting, such a denial of the revealed, supernatural God of the Scriptures would be in itself a piece of negative assent which signified reliance upon reason rather than revelation.

John Wesley also asserts that even those of the lowest capacity of understanding could know the supernatural working of God without complex theological doctrines; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 384.

Yet, even the simple person who only knew "I was blind, but now I see" had implicitly accepted the prior rational affirmation that there was One before him who could heal him. John Wesley could not anticipate the attack which Rudolf Bultmann would make, that even the biblical author's attestation to so-called fundamental realities originated from a certain pre-understanding. "Assent" was still required to the proposition that the supernatural reality to which Scripture affirmed did in fact correspond to an existent reality to which it claimed. Even a simpleton must give such an elemental assent. If this was the case, from Rudolf Bultmann's perspective then mental assent was an absolutely necessary pre-condition to saving faith in John Wesley's theology.

Furthermore, did not John Wesley imply that God's supra-rational truths must be grasped by the natural man prior to receiving saving faith? But how could this be possible since the natural man could not understand that which is spiritually discerned by faith?

90. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 194; vol. 2, p. 160; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 187; vol. 3, p. 359; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 492; vol. 2, p. 184; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 116; It was an ἐλεγχος "evidence" and "conviction" meaning basically the same thing; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 160.

91. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 160; Wesley, Explanatory Notes, p. 563. John Wesley was of course unaware of Rudolf Bultmann's theory that the book was written by an unknown author in a pocket of Hellenistic Christianity independent of Paul; Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. Kendrick Grobel, 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1952, 1955), vol. 1, pp. 108f., 111.

John Wesley seems to have been directed to this text in 1737 in Georgia by the Moravian, August Spangenberg, after he sought the Moravian definition of "faith"; Wesley, Journal, vol. 1, p. 372.

92. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 232, 235, 258; vol. 6, p. 356.
93. Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 231f.
94. Ibid., pp. 232, 258.

95. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 356; vol. 7, p. 258.
96. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 492; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 258. At best, their light was no better than twilight, giving them no demonstration of the invisible or eternal world; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 258f.
97. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, pp. 259, 232; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 492; vol. 1, p. 194; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 187.
98. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 359. Without faith, the oracles of God revealed nothing but remained "a mere dead letter"; Wesley, The Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 232.
99. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 174; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 160.
100. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 160. Scripture sometimes spoke of "God's giving light, sometimes a power of discerning it"; II Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 1:18; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 160f.
101. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 161; vol. 1, p. 304; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 6, p. 354.
102. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 161. For instance, by faith one was enabled to have certainty about his soul's existence. By faith one could know such things as he is fallen short of God's image; the Lord is Jehovah, a merciful God who is "a consuming fire"; of the judgment and its consequences; and the Son of God procured salvation from sins; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 232ff; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 255f.
103. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 138f., 418.
104. Ibid., p. 138f.
105. Ibid.
106. John Wesley was cognizant of John Pearson's exposition on faith in his The Exposition of the Creed. He was first directed to it by his mother at Oxford but throughout his life recommended the book. He seems to be indebted to it in his understanding of "assent", although he does not say so. John Wesley's definition of faith as "assent" in the sermon "Marks of the New Birth" is Bishop Pearson's, give or take a few immaterial amendments. Cf. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 418 with Bishop John Pearson's An Exposition of The Creed, revised and corrected by E. Burton, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1857), p. 2.
107. In his Exposition of the Creed, John Pearson distinguished between what was "evident" knowledge and what was "credible" knowledge. On this ground, not all assent could properly be called faith. On the one hand, the one who sees something done, knows it done. He assents because he sees. Sense appearance was "evident" to sense and understanding. This was not termed "credible" but "evident" knowledge.

On the other hand, when the one who has seen something done tells another what he saw, and the second person assents to it, the second person accepts it as "credible" and an object of faith. Something is said to be properly "credible" although what is asserted is neither apparent to our sense nor evident to the understanding in and of itself, nor deduced from any clear and necessary connection with the cause from which it proceeded. It, nonetheless, moves one to assent by the testimony given to it. This "credible" knowledge is the kind of knowledge to which divine faith is related. Pearson, Exposition, pp. 3ff.

108. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol.11, pp. 55ff, 268; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 38lf. Without the Spirit produced and informed "internal senses", one could not "judge truly or reason justly" about the things of God because one's reason would have no material with which to work; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 57.
109. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 256.
110. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 146.
111. Wilhelm Herrmann acknowledged that Martin Luther "allowed assensus" prior to faith; Wilhelm Herrmann, The Communion of the Christian, pp. 222ff. The Church of England taught in the Homilies that assent preceded justifying faith. Richard Baxter's analysis viewed "Assent to the Truth of the Gospel" an essential part of faith; Wesley, ed., Aphorisms, p. 28.
112. For example, see Thomas Goodwin's discussion of faith in the understanding as a spiritual sight in which his terminology parallels that of John Wesley. For instance, he says, "The Holy Ghost ... when he doth work faith in us, and reveal Christ and spiritual things to us, doth two things: First, he doth first give us a new understanding, a new eye...." Moreover, the idea of degrees of faith was current among the Puritans. Thomas Goodwin, The Works of Thomas Goodwin, D.D., with a general preface by John C. Miller and Memoir by Robert Halley, Vol. 8: The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith (Edinburgh: James Nichols; London: James Nisbet and Co.; Dublin: W. Robertson, 1863; reprint ed., Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), pp. 258ff.

CHAPTER THREE

FAITH IN PARTICULAR

INTRODUCTION

After describing faith "in general", John Wesley discussed faith "in a more particular sense". In trying to come to terms with his understanding, one is liable to voice Thomas Church's complaint, "You write in other places so variously about this matter, that I despair to find any consistency."¹ In a rare admission, John Wesley owned to Dr. Thomas Rutherford, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, that if all his sentiments were compared together from 1725 to 1768, there would be truth in the charge that he maintained contradictions. In fact, he acknowledged that during the latter part of this period he relinquished "several of my former sentiments".²

When we extend this period to the end of his life, we will find further adjustments to his sentiments. His refinements over the years in the matter of particular faith were performed with the finesse and precision of a lawyer subtle enough to evade the less diligent.³

John Wesley's thoughts on faith which span some fifty odd years might be likened to the surface of a sea in which, to the casual eye, the natural procession of waves roll continuously toward the shore in a current of seemingly rhythmic order while underneath sub-currents variously shift one way and then another. John Wesley consistently urged persons throughout his life to seek and expect the saving faith which was an inner, God-wrought consciousness of their pardon through Christ. Nonetheless, he urged this all the while the conceptions of some of the various gradations of faith as well as the gradation of saving faith necessary for acceptance with God were undergoing modification. Specifically, the year 1747 demarcated one understanding of saving faith from another amended version. In 1788 another understanding of the faith by which one is acceptable to God surfaced.

THE DESCRIPTION OF SAVING FAITH

1738 - 1747

Let us consider more closely how John Wesley defined and expatiated^{on} faith "in a more particular sense".⁴ In the first period from 1738 to 1747, faith in particular was denominated "justifying or saving faith"; "right living faith"; "the assurance of faith" (rather than the then current term, "the faith of assurance"); "the clear assurance of faith" and "the full assurance of faith".⁵ Keeping in mind John Wesley's key assumption that faith was meted out in "degrees" or gradations, rather like current on a rheostat, we will see these above terms are not necessarily synonymous but themselves may represent distinct gradations of faith. This will become clearer, hopefully, as we progress.

Within the time period 1738-1747, we notice sub-developments in his concept of faith as he tried to come to terms with his new-found Aldersgate faith. As he recognized in his letter to Dr. Rutherford, his "many different objectors" stretched him one way and another which forced him to think through his conception of faith.⁶ His definitions of 1739 and 1741 demonstrate his earliest formulation of faith. In his conversation with Bishop Butler in 1739, he asserted that justifying faith was "a conviction wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that Christ hath loved him and given himself for him, and that through Christ his sins are forgiven."⁷ His 1741 statement in "The Almost Christian" sermon, like his 1738 sermon "Salvation by Faith", was very similar: faith was not only to believe that the Holy Scriptures and the articles were true but also "to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ" -- 'whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments.'⁸

One notices herein for future reference two latently distinct and separable strands woven together and considered as a unit. One strand is the conviction that Christ has loved the individual and given himself for him. The

second strand is the conviction that through Christ the individual's sins are forgiven him. We find no self-consciously expressed appreciation of the distinction and the strands' ability to be separated at this point.

However, when we come to the 1744 and 1745 expressions, the two strands are consciously distinguished yet still comprehended under the aegis of "justifying faith". In answer to the question "What is faith?", the 1744 Minutes responded in the following way: "First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, 'Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.' -- This is that faith by which he is justified or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness, 'Thou art pardoned; thou hast redemption in his blood.' And this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart."⁹ They went on to state that all Christians had this faith. Moreover, they concluded "that no man can be justified and not know it, appears further from the nature of the thing."¹⁰ One notices both a logical and temporal distinction in the 1744 Minutes. Not only is the sinner's being convinced that Christ loved him a distinct thought or act in and of itself, but it also temporally ("first") precedes the second thought and act of assurance of pardon. The temporal distinction is taken essentially logically and theoretically.

Keeping in mind the above and what was previously said of "faith in general", let us further analyze the nature of saving faith evinced in John Wesley's definition. The definition incorporates both the Moravian inspired element of a divine, inner "conviction" and the "Homily of The Salvation of Mankind" element of "a sure trust and confidence...."

Absolutely fundamental to justifying faith's nature is the understanding of it as a divine, supernatural "conviction" wrought by the Holy Spirit within the individual. "Conviction" and "evidence" are often apposite and are equal in meaning.¹¹ Moreover, John Wesley could find little difference between these two terms and the term "assurance".¹² In this time period, "confidence" is also synonymous with these three terms.¹³

The "conviction" given is expressed in the two distinct strands we have hitherto identified: that, firstly, Christ hath loved me and given Himself for me; and, secondly, that through Christ, God pardoned and forgave me my sins. The first strand is an assurance that God is a pardoning God and He has provided the way through the Son's life and atoning death for my sins to be forgiven. The second strand is the actual assurance that my sins are now forgiven and that I am reconciled to God.

Between 1738-1747, it was absolutely crucial to saving faith that these two strands be taken together in the single "conviction". The Moravians had enlightened him to the necessity of this assurance as the two classic exchanges cited in the endnotes demonstrate.¹⁴

The 1746 Minutes set forth that the terms "the assurance of faith" and "the revelation of Christ in us" were nearly of the same meaning.¹⁵ In other words, they were so close in import that to deny one was to deny them both. Moreover, "assurance" and "conviction" were essentially what was meant by the "testimony of God's Spirit" or "the witness of the Spirit."¹⁶ This is manifested by his definition of "the testimony of the Spirit": "an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly 'witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God': that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."¹⁷ Therefore, we conclude that for all intents and purposes, all these above terms were essentially synonymous.

Therefore, when John Wesley explicated the character of the *μαρτυρία*, "the witness", "the testimony" or "the record", he was speaking of this inner "conviction", assurance. He prefaced his remarks by saying that it was "hard to find words in the language of men to explain the deep things of God." Indeed, none could adequately express what the Spirit worked.¹⁸ The testimony given by the Holy Spirit with our spirit was a Person testifying. Obviously, John Wesley accepted that this Person was the third Person of the Trinity who communicated His assurance of faith to the individual.

In his day, that the Holy Spirit testified to the recipient was not ostensibly disputed. The point of the dispute was the nature of the testimony; whether or not there was any "direct testimony" at all.¹⁹ More specifically, the main dispute between John Wesley and his critics was this: "Is there perceptible inspiration or is there not?"²⁰ Contrary to "John Smith" who maintained the Holy Spirit's inspiration was imperceptible and Bishop Thomas Sherlock who, according to John Wesley, stated it was "the consciousness of our own good works", John Wesley (drawing upon Galatians 4:6 and Romans 8:15-16) proclaimed that Holy Spirit's testimony was "immediate", "direct", and perceptible.²¹

He said he did not insist on the word "impression", but until better words were put forward, this term or others like it such as "discovery", "manifestation", or "deep sense" would have to do.²² He depicted this supra-sensuous "impression" in such sensory terminology as "voice", "sight", "feeling". He attested to his brother Samuel in 1739 that some in their reception of assurance had reported having "a strong representation to the eye of their minds of Christ either on the cross or in glory. This is the fact."²³ "Faith is seeing God; love is feeling God," he instructed John Bennet in 1744.²⁴ In 1764 he prodded Lady Maxwell onward to look at that instant and "see, as it were, Jesus Christ set forth, evidently set forth, crucified before your eyes? O hear His Voice! 'Daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee!'"²⁵

He explained that he did not mean that the Spirit gave the testimony by "any outward voice; no, nor always by an inward voice, although he may do this sometimes". Neither did he suppose that the Spirit always applied to the heart a Scriptural text(s).²⁶ He worked on the soul by His immediate influence which was a strong but inexplicable operation. Expressing this event by metaphors, he stated that the stormy wind and waves subsided; the heart rested in the arms of Jesus; and the sinner was satisfied that God was reconciled.²⁷

The testimony was also "immediate" and "direct" and not the result of reflection. The Spirit cried "Abba" in our hearts the moment the conviction was given antecedently to any reflection or sincerity or reasoning.²⁸ How may one who has the real witness in himself distinguish it from presumption? "How, I pray, do you distinguish day from night? ... or the light of a star ... from the light of the noonday sun?"²⁹ Like the essential difference between those, so there is "an inherent, essential difference between spiritual light and spiritual darkness; and between the light wherewith the Sun of Righteousness shines upon our heart, and that glimmering light which arises only from 'sparks of our own kindling'."³⁰ So, the difference was immediately and directly perceived (if spiritual senses are rightly disposed).³¹

This was clear: that the Spirit of God gave a believer such a testimony of his adoption by God that while it was present to the soul he could no more doubt the reality of his sonship than he could doubt the shining sun as he stood in the full blaze of his beams.³² The inextricable link between saving faith and the inner conviction (impression) of the Spirit may be witnessed in a fine passage given in the endnote in which John Wesley summarily described the event of a person under the law receiving faith.³³

In the period 1738 to 1747, John Wesley assuredly held that an assurance and consciousness that one's sins were forgiven and ~~one~~ was reconciled to God was absolutely necessary to justification. In 1740 he said he never knew one soul saved without the "faith of assurance".³⁴ He warned persons not to think they were justified before they had a "clear assurance" that God had forgiven their sins.³⁵ In fact, "the very essence" of saving faith was a divine "ἔλεγχος that he was now accepted in the beloved".³⁶ Though the 1745 Conference could not conceive of anyone believing longer than he saw a reconciled God, they refused to pontificate on whether there possibly might be some exempt cases.³⁷

Moreover, during the period 1738 to 1747, John Wesley developed a conception of faith consisting of varying "degrees" or strengths.³⁸ The first

"degree" identified in Scripture was typically referred to as "weak faith" or a "measure" of faith. The Apostle Paul and John referred to believers who were "little children". Jesus spoke of "ye of little faith".³⁹ Those with this faith were Christians, though "imperfect" ones.⁴⁰ This "weak faith" was the first rung of saving faith and was described as a "clear assurance" (or "the assurance of faith"). "Weak faith" or "clear assurance" signified faith which was an assurance that "my" sins are forgiven and that "I" am justified.⁴¹ However, though a clear assurance at first, it soon became clouded or mixed with doubt of the forgiveness or fear of not enduring to the end.⁴² Nonetheless, this faith implied accompanying peace, trust, love of God, and dominion over sin.⁴³ However, though through this faith one was assured that ~~one~~ was now in a state of salvation, it was not the grade of faith which assured one would persevere.⁴⁴

After "clear assurance", the next gradation which he isolated in the period 1738 to 1747 was πληροφορία πίστεως or "the plerophory of faith", "the full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22), the phrase introduced to him by the Moravians.⁴⁵ This was "full" assurance, not simply assurance. Early in September, 1738, he seems to have viewed the term "the plerophory of faith" as comprehending every degree of faith. Namely, saving faith was "the plerophory of faith".⁴⁶

However, later in October, 1738, he began to make a distinction between the πληροφορία and a lesser degree of faith. The "plerophory" was all the lesser degree of faith was and more: it produced a "joy in the Holy Ghost, joy which no man taketh away, joy unspeakable and full of glory".⁴⁷ Developing his thoughts further by 1745, he claimed that the "plerophory" was so clear a perception that Christ abides in the individual as utterly excludes all doubt and fear and leaves him not even for an hour. It was the difference between the morning and midday sun.⁴⁸

Let us pause at this point and reflect upon the nature of John Wesley's understanding of faith in particular. At Aldersgate, John Wesley ^{believed that} what

Jesus had done for "the many" was particularized to him as what Jesus had done and was even now doing for him alone. His May 1738 testimony of saving faith leaps from one personal pronoun to the next, from the object "me" to the subject "I". Often these were italicized for emphasis. He was now conscious that Jesus' salvation was personalized and applied to him as he wrote, "(the) Son of God hath loved me and given Himself for me; and that I, even I am now reconciled to God"⁴⁹ Salvation was not just something that related to a general, vague, distant, impersonal entity, "the world", from which one was essentially removed and with which one was only remotely involved. The effects of Jesus' death on the cross were now being appropriated and directed to Him from heaven and realized consciously in his own life. He became personally related and connected to God Himself and His favouring activity. The divine assurance -- the eternal, crucified and resurrected Jesus Himself -- encountered him in such a way that he knew its real existence for himself. The transcendent but immanent Jesus Christ impinged directly and immediately upon the individual's own body and soul, effecting and affecting the individual's very own being.

Moreover, justifying faith was more than a personal reliance upon a transcendent judicial transaction in the heavenly courtroom. It was more than placing trust in Jesus' past atoning death or in a future, eschatological, saving occurrence. It was a received, supernatural impression from Jesus that His death was now availing for "me". Faith was "felt" -- and "felt" now in time and space. The eternal, invisible God who is and was and is to come, who had specially spoken to Moses, Elijah, and Paul once again tore back the veil, making Himself known and unmistakably sensed by the individual person. Furthermore, with His past acts won and His future works promised, He perforated like a laser this aeon's prescriptions of time and space and realized His work once again in the individual's present.

Rudolf Bultmann shared an understanding not altogether dissimilar from John Wesley's. His theology rejected an understanding of religion in which

man took a neutral standpoint and spoke of propositions whose significance was their universal validity not related to the concrete situation of the speaker.⁵⁰ He opposed the kind of speaking in which man put himself outside the actual reality of his own existence and detached himself from his concrete existence. That is, the religious man spoke about his existence, not from it. He looked on as a "subject" at an outside event viewing it as an "object" rather than allowing the event to happen to him.

Allowing for Rudolf Bultmann's particular expressions, John Wesley's confession to Mr. Spangenberg that he knew Jesus had saved "the world" is not unrelated to Rudolf Bultmann's concern. John Wesley's statement reflected a sense in which this general affirmation was seen as only remotely relating to his own immediate "concrete" situation. John Wesley spoke about a salvation but not from it. It was an outside event which had not become an inside event happening to him.

Rudolf Bultmann further described this neutral observer who lacked justifying faith as unresponsive to the future and clinging to the past. However, he, like John Wesley, proclaimed that the salvation-occurrence of Jesus' death and resurrection was not just a past instant of vanishing time but the future promise of the possibility of authentic life (salvation) in which the eschatological now may actually occur once again in the individual's life as it did in Paul's.⁵¹ He said, "Christ becomes contemporary in the preaching."⁵² Salvation is once again disclosed in the present when an individual submits to the "summons". The man of faith knows that the revelation has encountered him, that he is "graced" and really forgiven. Faith gives an understanding that man prior to faith cannot have.

John Wesley accepted that persons prior to faith may know about saving faith but until they "felt" and received the consciousness of this saving faith, they neither had nor knew faith. Similarly, Rudolf Bultmann allowed that persons may know (wissen) ontologically of faith's concrete, personal existence like a friendless person knows about friendship. But persons without faith do

not know what occurs in faith's ontic or existentiell, concrete personal existence.⁵³ Both saw faith only coming into being for the individual when God's salvation event became real and visibly first-hand to him, he personally becoming acquainted with that which was encountered. True faith was the personal consciousness that one's existence was qualified by God in a new and saving way.

Having said this, Rudolf Bultmann resisted identifying faith with any human "experience". Faith, according to him, could never be identified with any spiritual experience. The "new man" was of the "Beyond" and utterly transcendent.⁵⁴ However, call it what one will, he is just as committed as John Wesley to the assertion that something occurs in faith in which the believer now knows he is "graced" and forgiven.

Nevertheless, for Rudolf Bultmann the man of faith could not know for certain whether or not he has faith. Furthermore, while Rudolf Bultmann urged the believer to distrust and doubt his "experience", John Wesley trusted experience and saw it as a reliable registration of God's immanent presence. For him, faith was and must be experiential. The promises of the oracles of God corresponded to and were verified in the experience of faith. This understanding of experience Rudolf Bultmann desired to avoid.

1747 - 1788

A turning point in John Wesley's understanding of faith and assurance occurred in July 1747. While thinking on what he considered to be a great need in Methodism, that is, a new inquiry into the first principles of justifying faith, the logic of his heretofore understanding of justifying faith was called into question. The issue of the nature of faith and its relation to justification had remained unsettled. The Conference Minutes of 1745, 1746, and 1747 regarding this issue indicate his and the Conferences' uncertainty and equivocation.⁵⁵ Moreover, in addition to the June 1747 Conference discussion, John Wesley's re-thinking might have been provoked by his reading of the

works of the Nonconformists, particularly those which Philip Doddridge had recommended to him the previous year. For in the Conference of June 1747, Question Two considered the judgment of "most of the serious Dissenters" regarding justifying faith and Divine assurance.⁵⁶ Their view, which differed from John Wesley's prevailing view, expressed the general understanding which he was soon to embrace. His polemic with "John Smith" over the issue perhaps also contributed to his uneasiness.⁵⁷

In his reflection of July 1747, he asked himself, "Is justifying faith a sense of pardon?" He answered "Negatur", "denied".⁵⁸ This denial demarcated an important modification in his previously held understanding of justifying faith and the assurance of faith. He recalled that the theme of justifying faith had once been quite new to ~~Methodists~~^{Methodists} on account of the fact that previously they had "heard nothing" about justifying faith or a sense of pardon.⁵⁹ In consequence, they had in the heat and hurry of controversy swayed too far one way and the other. His past swaying appeared to be predominately in one direction: he had equated justifying faith with a sense of pardon.

Now, the implicit two strands which had composed justifying faith were consciously distinguished and understood to be logically and ontologically separate from one another. Only one prong became essential to, if not the very essence of, justifying faith.⁶⁰ He formulated this distinction in his reflections of July, 1747. He now conceived justifying faith to be that faith which whoever had it was not "under the wrath and curse of God".⁶¹ It was differentiated from the second prong which was a sense of pardon, "a distinct, explicit assurance that my sins are forgiven".⁶² Hereafter, he distinguished between justifying faith and the sense of pardon.

He stated quite clearly that justifying faith was not to be equated with a sense of pardon. He said, "But I cannot allow that justifying faith is such an assurance, or necessarily connected therewith."⁶³ He now judged it unscriptural to assert that those who did not have an explicit sense of pardon, were, as long as they had it not, under God's wrath. To assert this

was contrary to experience and to reason. In fact, "... it is flatly absurd," he said.⁶⁴ "For how can a sense of our having received pardon be the condition of our receiving it?" he asked.⁶⁵ Similarly, in 1756 he agreed with Richard Thompson's statement that "the Spirit's witnessing that we are accepted cannot be the faith whereby we are accepted."⁶⁶ In other words, a "conviction that we are justified cannot be implied in justifying faith".⁶⁷

What then in more detail was the faith which constituted justifying faith? His most common conception of justifying faith based upon Galatians 2:20 after July, 1747, was expressed to Dr. John Free in 1758. Justifying faith was a divine evidence or conviction that "Christ loved me and gave Himself for me."⁶⁸ That he was content to leave justifying faith simply as the real, inner persuasion that Christ has died for me without also including the aspect of a conviction of one's forgiveness is elsewhere amply displayed in his writings throughout the period of 1747-1788. Indeed, this was essentially how the 1747 Conference defined it, though they conceived the words to carry the import of the pre-1747 understanding of faith.⁶⁹ In the 1748 sermon "The Marks of the New Birth", he declared that the faith by which we are born again was "a true confidence of the mercy of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ".⁷⁰ He wrote to James Hervey in 1756 that the faith that justified was a divine evidence and conviction that "Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me."⁷¹ In the 1765 sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation" he stated that the faith whereby we "receive Christ" in all His offices (Prophet, Priest, and King) was a divine evidence, not only that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, but also that Christ 'loved me, and gave himself for me."⁷²

Therefore, John Wesley was willing to allow that there may be instances of persons without a clear assurance of forgiveness existing in a state of justification. For in 1756 Richard Thompson asked him, "Can a man who has not a clear assurance that his sins are forgiven be in a state of justification?" He replied he believed there were instances of it.⁷³ He told Dr.

John Green in 1761 that "a man may be a real Christian without being "assured of his salvation".⁷⁴

There are several noteworthy observations to be made in regards to his understanding of justifying faith in the period 1747-1788. Firstly, justifying faith was still viewed as an "assurance". He explicitly stated the difference between the term "assurance" and "evidence" was too slight to call.⁷⁵ The justifying faith now asserted was, just as it was previously, an assurance or consciousness. However, there was an important qualification: it was now only an inner sense that "Christ loved me and gave himself for me." Indeed, without this direct and immediate conviction or assurance, there could be no good hopes of salvation.⁷⁶ Furthermore, this was the only faith necessary to all Christians.⁷⁷ To deny the existence of the testimony "Lord, I am damned -- but Thou hast died" in effect denied justification by faith.⁷⁸

Secondly, one notices that his re-crafted conception of justifying faith still entailed the personal appropriation of the love and sacrificial death of Christ to "me". Justifying faith was more than simply being assured and convinced of a truth or a doctrine. To affirm such would have returned him to an intellectualized faith. Rather, justifying faith was an inner persuasion that Christ's love and atoning death was directed to and applied to one's own personal existence.

The distinction which he now drew between justifying faith and assurance of pardon was one which had been worked on in the seventeenth century. For instance, Thomas Goodwin in distinguishing between justifying faith and assurance stated that he did not fall into the papists' error. The papists taught that to believe in the general truths, such as "that Christ hath died", was "true faith". However, he argued, unless the belief in the general truth was allowed to draw the heart in to Christ in particular, to rest on Him for one's salvation, then it was "a vain faith".⁷⁹ The belief "that Christ hath died" applied to the heart was salvation.

Thirdly, John Wesley did not cease either to hold or to assert "a distinct, explicit assurance that my sins are forgiven".⁸⁰ He continued to urge that the "proper Christian faith" necessarily implied the conviction of sins being forgiven.⁸¹ The divine conviction that "I" am reconciled to God was implied in the justifying conviction that Christ loved me and gave himself for me.⁸² Thus, by deduction and by express acknowledgment, John Wesley taught that the Christian could properly expect two assurances (rather than the one as previously asserted). Having said that, one might very easily mistake his explanation in the 1765 sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation", as affirming his pre-1747 position. However, comparison with statements elsewhere corroborates his intent to assert that the Christian who has justifying faith will also at some point in time receive the Spirit's assurance that he is a child of God. God would follow up at some point in time the assurance of justifying faith with an assurance of sonship and forgiveness.⁸³ In other words, while justifying faith makes him a son, the assurance of forgiveness confirms the fact.⁸⁴

Moreover, once he is assured he is a son, the Spirit also gives him a child-like confidence and reliance in God as a reconciled Father.⁸⁵ John Wesley told Richard Thompson in 1756 that the same compassion which moved God to pardon a mourner moved God to comfort him by witnessing to his spirit that his sins were pardoned.⁸⁶ So, though justifying faith and the assurance of pardon were in some sense separable, in another sense they were, as a rule, united companions.

Fourthly, though he permitted that one may be justified without a consciousness of being in the favour of God, he nevertheless continued to insist that it was the common privilege of Christians fearing God and working righteousness to have such a consciousness of pardon.⁸⁷ Though the new distinctions were carefully in place, he could still be heard in the period 1747-1788 to be saying what he always had said since 1738.

For example, he confirmed in 1768 to James Morgan that Methodists and Scripture taught that one was lost until God spoke forgiveness to his heart.⁸⁸ When he asserted this, John Wesley was not reneging on the distinction arrived at in 1747. As he outlined ^{his view} to Dr. Lavington in 1751, the faith necessary to all Christians was simple faith without a conviction of present pardon.⁸⁹ However, the normative faith which he exhorted and expected Christians to receive was "a consciousness of being in the favour of God".⁹⁰ So, if he ran these two faiths together and was not always clear about making the distinction between justifying faith and the assurance of pardon (as the 1765 sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation" demonstrates),⁹¹ it was probably because he was less interested in preaching the distinction or the lower level of faith than he was in emphasizing that consciousness of pardon was the ordinary Christian experience.⁹² The general rule was still that the Christian ought to expect the Spirit of God to witness with his spirit that he is a child of God.⁹³

During the period 1747-1788, John Wesley continued to understand the nature of faith as consisting of varying degrees, further developing these various gradations. If we exclude "faith in general" (the evidence of spiritual things, man "under conviction") from our immediate purview, justifying faith as we have just been describing it was the first level of faith. The next degree of faith was "a consciousness of being in the favour of God" (the reception of "the Spirit of adoption") which was "frequently weakened, nay perhaps interrupted, by returns of doubt and fear".⁹⁴ As has been established, this degree of faith was a gradation beyond the faith whereby one is accepted by God.⁹⁵ The next level of faith after this was commonly called "the full assurance of faith", or the πληροφορία ἐλπίδος.⁹⁶ This "full assurance of faith" was not "a distinct thing" from faith, but just a high degree of faith.⁹⁷ The "full assurance of faith" was "a full conviction of present pardon".⁹⁸ The operative word at this level of faith was "full". What he meant by "full assurance of faith" was described in 1768 as the degree of assurance of being

now in the favor of God as excluding "all doubt and fear".⁹⁹

Likewise, in 1781 he defined the "plerophory of faith" as "such a clear conviction that I am now in the favour of God as excludes all doubt and fear concerning it".¹⁰⁰ The Holy Spirit wrought this assurance just as He produces every degree. While Christians prior to this measure of faith may be labelled "little children", those with full assurance are styled "young men" (from the apostle John).¹⁰¹ John Wesley was consistent in maintaining that "the full assurance of faith" did not imply the full assurance of perseverance.¹⁰² The degree of "full assurance of faith" did not guarantee the Christian he would be finally saved.

The next gradation of faith was not altogether free of contradiction. In 1748, he viewed πληροφορία ἐλπίδος, "the full assurance of hope" as synonymous with "the full assurance of faith". This was the testimony of the Spirit of God bearing witness with or to our spirit that we are children of God.¹⁰³ Moreover, it was a living hope that we should see Him as He is.

However, as early as 1751, "the full assurance of hope" or "the plerophory", was now also called the "full assurance of perseverance".¹⁰⁴ This "full assurance of perseverance" was an assurance given by God of everlasting salvation. Only given to "a few, but very few," this assurance "excludes all doubt of our final salvation".¹⁰⁵ In 1781 he asserted, "The full assurance of hope is such clear confidence that I shall enjoy the glory of God as excludes all doubt and fear concerning this."¹⁰⁶ He was not hesitant in insisting further that this confidence was totally different from the opinion that no saint shall fall from grace. Indeed, it had no relation to it. In this latter wrong opinion, perseverance was believed to remain whether persons sinned or served God. On the contrary, the full assurance of hope which he advocated did not and could not continue any longer than the believer walked closely with God. Giving way to anything unholy either in heart or life clouded the full assurance of hope. Therefore, "the full assurance of hope" did not include any assurance of one's future behavior and could not subsist any longer than

the heart cleaved steadfastly to God.¹⁰⁷

1788 AND AFTER

In 1788, three years prior to John Wesley's death, a curious little reshuffle which is difficult to assess seems to have occurred in regards to his conception of faith and its relation to justification. A long-held dichotomy between the "servant" and "child" of God came more into the foreground. Let us recall some of the relevant exchanges prior to 1788 which may help us assess his reshuffle. In 1746 he depicted a "servant" as one "under the law", "under conviction", who with slavish fear saw God as the just and terrible who avenged everyone who rebelled against him. He was awakened, but had no peace; though, not a son of God, he was not far from the kingdom of heaven.¹⁰⁸ These penitents who mourned after God were not to be acknowledged as being in the favour of God. John Wesley was clear in his letter to James Morgan in 1768 that this was Methodist teaching. He said, "We have always taught that a penitent mourned ... because he felt he was "not in favour of God ... and we believe he was really lost and undone"¹⁰⁹

In a separate but related matter, the 1745 Conference discussed the issue of heathens and their acceptance by God. Cornelius whose prayers and alms were a memorial before God provided this precedent. The Conference concluded he was accepted as being in God's favour "in some degree" before he believed in Christ. They agreed that he was accepted on the principle that he feared God and did the best he could without having heard the gospel.¹¹⁰ In July, 1771, John Wesley in explaining the 1770 Minutes reaffirmed that among those who had never heard of Christ, the one who "fears God and works righteousness" according to the light he has is in the favour of God (Acts 10:34ff).¹¹¹

In April, 1788, he confessed that when the Methodists first preached salvation by faith fifty years ago they were not sufficiently apprized of the difference between a "servant" and a "child" of God.¹¹² He had now come to

accept that one who "feared God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."¹¹³ Furthermore, he maintained that, according to the Apostle, whosoever in every nation believed thus far was "at that very moment in a state of acceptance." He was a "servant of God", but not properly a son. Further, John Wesley identified this "servant of God" as the man who was also "under conviction", who felt himself "at once altogether sinful, altogether guilty, and altogether helpless".¹¹⁴

We take note of the fact that the "servant" "under conviction" who formerly in 1746 was not considered "accepted of God" is now, in 1788, judged to be accepted in a degree. Moreover, the qualification that the one who "hears God and worketh righteousness" and is accepted of Him be a heathen who has not heard the Gospel is not present. However, this dropping of the qualification of having heard the gospel is not crucial.¹¹⁵

By 1788 John Wesley's writings made clear that he understood "fear" of God to constitute a species of faith. The heathen (like Cornelius) who feared God believed "according to the dispensation he is under".¹¹⁶ However, for the one who had heard the Gospel, he must believe and, therefore, do as God hath willed and commanded him to do in order that it be said he feared God and worked righteousness.¹¹⁷ This meant nothing less than having a divine evidence of the invisible, eternal world, being convinced of one's sin, one's evil nature, and fearing the wrath of God.¹¹⁸

Thus, the essential variation was that in 1788 he now allowed that the one who was "under conviction" and had the species of faith of a "servant of God" was now accepted of God. Previously he had judged this person to be in an unsaved state. Just as it had been for the Puritans in the seventeenth century, this interface had always been a "gray" elusive area. In 1768 he felt the position he was later to adopt in 1788 to be unscriptural and unsafe. He argued it directly tended to dampen the desire for the revelation of Christ and the Spirit's witness of adoption.¹¹⁹ Now in 1788 the balance of burden of responsibility in a sense was shifted from man to God. The "servant" "under

conviction" was one ready to receive; the timing of the giving of fuller faith lay with God. Moreover, the faith that one had as a "servant" was already a demonstration that God had called him "to his honorable service".¹²⁰ The "servant" was accepted and unless he "halt by the way", he "will receive the adoption of sons" said John Wesley.¹²¹

The argument that a low degree of faith already implied God's will to complete the salvation begun reflects a Reformed argument with a Wesleyan twist. For example, William Perkins held that a person who "doth but begin to be converted", who "sighs and groans" for a lively faith, had already the seed (or bud) and first signs of regeneration. For one with the seed of faith, regeneration had already begun.¹²²

Both John Wesley and the strict Reformed position held that believing as a "servant" indicated that God would bring the "servant" to full adoption. The difference between him and the Reformed lies in that whereas the strict Reformed asserted that whomever God truly called He irresistibly regenerated, John Wesley allowed the possibility that the one called may stall and not receive full faith.

In 1788 the basic description of faith and its calibrations remained as before. What he now did was to lower the threshold of initial acceptance with God. Was the faith of the "servant" "under conviction" who was accepted in a "low degree" now considered to be justifying faith? By deduction this would seem to be the conclusion. Nonetheless, John Wesley never labels it as such and the matter is left in ambiguity. In fact, he does not bring into the discussion the terms saving or justifying faith in his 1788 sermons "On Faith" or "The Discoveries of Faith".

Was the person accepted with his sin forgiven or unforgiven? If his sin was forgiven, then what place was there for the next gradation of faith, justifying faith? If he was accepted without forgiveness, why should God arbitrarily and redundantly require another justifying faith which would grant pardon from sin which was not necessary since an acceptance had already

been attained?

Moreover, as he was accepted as a "servant", was he not accepted (according to the definition of a "servant's" faith) without having a consciousness that Jesus loved him and gave himself for him". One must remember that in this issue of "the servant of God" and his acceptance John Wesley was trying to deal with the seam of the garment and not the garment itself. If the line between reprobation and justification (regeneration) eluded John Wesley, so had it eluded the greatest of the seventeenth century Puritans before him.¹²³

His discussion in 1788 on the "servant of God" was not motivated by a desire to lessen or retract the necessity of the justifying faith which he had always preached. This was still intact. He was rather tempering his deemed misguided cut-and-dry condemnation of sincere persons who feared God and who straddled the line of ambiguity because they had not felt the assurance of faith.¹²⁴

In spite of this adjustment to his theology, he did not cease to exhort persons to receive the faith normative for Christians. Though one who has the faith of a servant "is not in anywise to be despised", he was "exhorted not to stop there; not to rest till he attains the adoption of sons".¹²⁵ John Wesley continued to affirm that "the proper voice of a child of God" was "Christ revealed in his heart".¹²⁶ He enjoined the "servant" "to expect it every moment!" and not to be satisfied with less.¹²⁷ Though advising the "servant" not to undervalue the faith given him, he warned him to beware of resting there. He encouraged him to "press on till you receive the Spirit of adoption. Rest not till that Spirit clearly witnesses with your spirit that you are a child of God."¹²⁸ Then the believer may become a "Father" in the faith in which he would be delivered from doubts and fears and also from sin -- inward and outward. Moreover, he then would enjoy the "full assurance of hope" while he rejoiced evermore, prayed without ceasing, and in everything, gave thanks.¹²⁹

In conclusion, the essential content and nature of faith calibrated in various degrees remained constant throughout John Wesley's evangelical life. What particularly fluctuated regarding faith and justification was the degree of faith considered to be the absolute bare minimum for acceptance with God. From 1738 to 1747, it was the divine, inner impression given by the Holy Spirit in the individual's soul that Jesus loved "me" and gave himself for "me" and had forgiven "me" my sin and accepted me as a child of God; from 1747 to 1788 the threshold was lowered a degree to the divine, personal conviction that Jesus loved "me" and gave himself for "me". Lastly, he was willing to concede that persons who were enlightened to the invisible world and who were under the conviction of sin were accepted in a "low degree" by God and would be brought to full acceptance if they did not halt.

Perhaps more than anything this was to give the benefit of the doubt to the person who, equally athirst for salvation, sought after God with the same degree of sincerity and earnestness as another person but rather than receiving consciousness of his favour went without it.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, this "servant's" faith did not appear to be necessarily devoid of faith in Jesus and his capacity as atoning Saviour. In June, 1788, he described the one that had this low level of faith as one who knew by faith that God the Son lived and died for man's salvation, rising, ascending, and reigning in heaven.¹³¹

ANALYSIS

How did John Wesley's understanding of faith compare and contrast with other descriptions in theological history? John Wesley claimed in 1756 Luther, Melancthon, and many other of the reformers "frequently and strongly assert that every believer is conscious of his own acceptance with God, and that by a supernatural evidence"¹³² Martin Luther's understanding of faith did comprehend feeling and experience. He explained like John Wesley after him that the "feeling" associated with faith was not the feeling of the physical senses and every day experience. As Hebrews chapter

eleven affirmed, it had to do with things not seen. Justifying faith involved "another feeling" not related to the sensate organs.

Nonetheless, Martin Luther like John Wesley appropriated experiential expressions in speaking of faith. He used the terms "convinces" or "grasps"; the heart "feels how true and right the word is"; it must "know", "feel", and "taste".¹³³ He held the believer feels he has a gracious God and feels that Christ is in his heart, living and acting within him.¹³⁴

While both Martin Luther and John Wesley agreed personal experience of faith was necessary to have Christ as Saviour, John Wesley, at least for most of his life, pressed the identity of faith and experience to synonymity. That is, one was not saved until one had the inner witness. Albeit, Martin Luther readily accepted that experience may be paradoxical to faith, John Wesley assumed that one's feelings directly and harmoniously correlated with one's faith.

Though Rudolf Bultmann's view was represented in Martin Luther, Rudolf Bultmann went beyond him. As Martin Luther, he resisted identifying faith with any human experience of this world. No person -- the man of faith or his observer -- could know empirically that he had faith.¹³⁵ However, Rudolf Bultmann rejected the suggestion that a transcendent, personal Deity interpenetrated the believer. Claims of "religious experience" brought Christianity under attack.¹³⁶

Whereas Martin Luther rested the believer's confidence in the believer's holding to God's promise of Scripture, John Wesley laid the believer's confidence in God's Scriptural promise of forgiveness supernaturally manifested and supra-empirically received by the believer.

For Rudolf Bultmann, God's revelation and the Spirit's witness were present and active in the world only in the Word. That the proclamation could be the occasion of seeking internal or external assurance that one is forgiven or has faith was the epitome of secularization and sinful existence. Faith meant abandoning a search for proof and forsaking all confidence. It

was deciding for a proclamation spoken from beyond our existence which did not carry rational or empirical evidence or proof.¹³⁷ Contrary to Martin Luther, faith for Rudolf Bultmann was not confidence in the Scriptural proclamation but the resolution to be obedient to its demand. In contrast to John Wesley, justifying faith is an eschatological event which "is not a phenomenon of existence" and not demonstrable.¹³⁸

For both Martin Luther and John Wesley, the Holy Spirit was the progenitor of the "testimony". For John Wesley, the testimony was the Holy Spirit's literal communication perceived within man. For Martin Luther, He seemed to work indirectly, subserviently, and jointly with man through man's trust;¹³⁹ whereas, for John Wesley, He imparted quite directly, immediately, and instantly His message emanating from Himself which was registered in man.

For Rudolf Bultmann, neither such descriptions of the workings of the inner life and expressions of experience were descriptions of the Holy Spirit's work but only man's speech.¹⁴⁰ The work of God could not be denoted as an activity which could be observed.¹⁴¹ He would judge Martin Luther as well as John Wesley as speaking from a sinful understanding and engaging in "self-deceit".¹⁴²

Finally, neither Martin Luther nor Rudolf Bultmann ~~unlike~~ John Wesley conceptualized faith in terms of "degrees" of faith nor analyzed such gradations. Since, for John Wesley, inner impressions and human experience of the Holy Spirit were directly related to the faith by which one was accepted of God, distinguishing between awarenesses was vital in determining what constituted a justifying experience.

Perhaps the closest historical analogy to John Wesley's mature teaching on justifying faith and assurance is found in English Puritanism, albeit there is similarity with Moravianism and German Pietism. Like John Wesley, English Puritans were keenly interested in determining and promoting the correlation between Scriptural testimony and personal, spiritual experience.¹⁴³ With a

renewed interest in the Holy Spirit, they sought to show that grace came not from God as a removed Creator but through a personal experience of the direct operation of His Spirit.¹⁴⁴ Grace was an "indwelling" of the Spirit which demanded "entertainment" in the heart.¹⁴⁵

For the Puritan Richard Sibbes, the certainty of the believer's acceptance by God was not simply the reasoned acceptance of God's promises. It was also felt. There was "sweet harmony between God, reconciled in Christ, and the soul" which resulted in inward peace and joy of the Holy Spirit and the shedding abroad of "the love of Christ in the soul".¹⁴⁶ John Preston envisaged the witness of the Word always going hand-in-glove with the witness of the Spirit in true "effectual" saving faith.¹⁴⁷

One of the chief characteristics of the seventeenth century Puritans was their emphasis upon the doctrine of assurance of eternal salvation and related matters of conscience. William Perkins' question summed up their most important concern, "How may a man know whether he be a child of God or no?"¹⁴⁸ John Wesley demonstrated his kinship to the Puritans in his renewed preoccupation with the doctrine of assurance. However, he differed in an important way from the strict Reformed Puritan. While assurance of one's eternal state was not, as we have seen, totally out of his purview, an assurance of future, eternal salvation, as he readily pointed out, was not what he preached. Rather, he preached an assurance of present justification.¹⁴⁹ He said, "Therefore, ... it is no evasion at all to say, "This (the faith which we preach as necessary to all Christians) is not properly an assurance of what is future."¹⁵⁰

John Wesley, like the Puritans, was decidedly interested in determining how the testimony of the Spirit could be distinguished from false presumption in order that persons could be assured of their justification.¹⁵¹ As we have seen, determining the theological basis of justification and assurance engaged John Wesley throughout his lifetime. However, his thrust was equally directed to re-introducing and making an appeal in his generation for the

present reality, nature, and absolute necessity of a direct and immediately inspirational awareness in the soul of the believer. An insistent appeal for an inspirational, supernatural witness within a believer was necessitated by an Age which had been content to let what was deemed a fanatical doctrine lie in the ashes of a by-gone Puritanism.

Affirmed by Puritan theology, the concept of "degrees" of faith was present in John Wesley's theology at least from the date of May 29, 1738 when he recognized that "God hath given some degree of faith even to me."¹⁵² The concept of "degrees" of faith seems to have been current among Moravians and those influenced by them.¹⁵³ Moreover, he found evidence in Holy Scripture of various levels of believers.¹⁵⁴

At any rate, an awareness of the degrees of faith was already present immediately after Aldersgate. Not long after, he discovered that the English Puritans also conceived of faith in various gradations. They had been developing the various distinctions of faith a century before the rise of Methodism.¹⁵⁵ That the 1747 Conference had sought the counsel of the English Puritan Dissenters is testimony to the fact that they, by now, had gained John Wesley's ear. He had not only found precedents for a self-awareness and supernatural evidence of one's acceptance with God in Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, the Reformers, and the Reformed Churches in Europe but also, happily and in particular, within the English Puritans of his own English church tradition.¹⁵⁶ In responding to the criticism that "No Protestant divine ever taught your doctrine of assurance," he rattled off a list of Puritans such as William Perkins, Robert Bolton, Richard Sibbs (sic), and John Preston which he implied supported his view and with whom he was familiar.¹⁵⁷

As we have pointed out, for almost the first ten years of his evangelistic career, John Wesley, as evinced by his 1747 Conference debate, differed with "the Judgment of most of the serious dissenters" over which species of faith was the common privilege of believers. He had accepted that justifying faith

included the assurance of present eternal life and excluded any fear either of death or hell.¹⁵⁸

However, such Puritans as Robert Bolton affirmed that those who had faith, albeit "little faith" and were in doubt regarding the forgiveness of their sins, had faith in Christ which should not be disparaged.¹⁵⁹ Thomas Goodwin concluded that the act of faith which justified a sinner was distinct from "prevailing assurance" in which a believer was able to say "Christ is mine, and my sins are forgiven" in which he knew that he had eternal life.¹⁶⁰ Thomas Goodwin lamented that the view which John Wesley maintained from 1738 to 1747 condemned many just ones.¹⁶¹ As has been shown, John Wesley himself later came to accept this criticism as he gravitated to the Puritan understanding. Reading their writings probably helped provoke his rethinking of justification by faith while also providing him with an articulation of the distinction between justifying faith and the full assurance of faith.

Though we have noted that John Wesley eventually allowed such a distinction between justifying faith (the assurance of faith) and the full assurance of faith, he did not cease in urging people not to rest in "weak" faith.¹⁶² His general expectation that Christians experience the full assurance which was their common privilege was the same note struck the century before, for example, by Thomas Goodwin.¹⁶³

Having said this, John Wesley seems to have viewed full assurance as an easily-won and more common experience than apparently the mainstream Puritans perceived it. Contrary to John Wesley, they conceived of assurance more as a rare blessing of a mature faith experienced after many conflicts, doubts, and temptations.¹⁶⁴ They were said to be highly suspicious of the vulgar prophets and Quakers who claimed to have gained the blessing on easy terms.¹⁶⁵

John Wesley's use of the analogy of sense perception to explain the inner experience of the Spirit is also a reverberation of Puritanism. In their attempt to describe the inward experience of the Spirit, the Puritans like Martin

Luther drew a parallel to sense perception. Richard Sibbes spoke of the active Spirit who "warmed" his heart.¹⁶⁶ John Preston stated that the Holy Spirit enabled us to discern His promises and believe them by "an immediate voice" by which he speaks into our hearts.¹⁶⁷ Unless there was this "secret voice of the Spirit of Christ" speaking to the hearts - as a minister did to the ears - none would come to take Christ.¹⁶⁸ Thomas Goodwin stated the Holy Ghost expressed faith to us by the knowledge of the senses. On the basis of Philippians, 1:9 he argued that spiritual knowledge was there called "sense".¹⁶⁹ He, like John Wesley and Martin Luther, distinguished this spiritual sense from natural sense perception. The things themselves were not seen to reason or to the bodily senses but the mind was given a new sense by which spiritual things were seen.¹⁷⁰ This new understanding was called "a new eye".¹⁷¹ Jesus Christ, Himself the light, brought light to this new eye and demonstrated the image of Himself and the things of the gospel to this new understanding just as light brought colors to the physical eye.¹⁷²

For the Puritans, like John Wesley, justifying faith and assurance must be, to use a common Puritan expression, "effectual". Namely, the faith that was accepted by God must be a faith conjoined with an immediately perceptible impression in the inward person given by the Holy Spirit which communicates a fitting word from God. Moreover, the person's ability to receive such a signal within was also due to the work of God. The Holy Spirit was responsible for both the inner supra-empirical sense organ and the Divine message received by it. John Wesley and the seventeenth century Puritans agreed with Catholics that the Holy Spirit worked supernaturally in the soul of the person in a state of grace. Moreover, he - like such Puritans as Isaac Ambrose - did not neglect the Catholic penchant for the inner "graces of the Spirit". However, they distinguished themselves from the Catholics in that they taught and emphasized the immediate, direct witness of the Spirit in the person.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, John Wesley, for the first nine years of his regenerated life and ministry, identified justifying faith with a Spirit-wrought persuasion of pardon. This fact distinguished him from almost everybody - including Martin Luther and the Reformers, the Catholics, the Puritans and Rudolf Bultmann - except the Moravians to whom he was most akin in this regard. In 1747, after having re-thought this position, he qualified his position in a way which showed his indebtedness to the subtleties of Puritan scholastic theology. The various modifications of his theology that we have heretofore enumerated attest to the fact that his theology was growing as he was going.

Nonetheless, his general understanding of faith remained essentially intact throughout his post-Aldersgate life. It was distinctly supernatural and inspirational, Christ-centered, personal and perceptible. However, as he was challenged by persons' real-life experiences, his reading, and his critics to clarify faith's relation to justification and assurance, he found himself in a twilight zone in which even the best of the Puritans had only been able to grope.¹⁷³ What was the line between reprobation and justification? What was the status of the person who was neither considered to have faith nor be entirely without it? What was the status of the person who had a conviction of sin and a desire for grace yet had received no inner impression of faith? How could a reprobate sinner who by definition was totally depraved and shut out from grace have an inchoate desire for grace without having already received the Holy Spirit? Lurking behind these questions was the whole issue of grace and free will. Between 1747 and approximately 1788 he judged the person typified by these questions to be short of justification. At least by 1788 he determined this person to be accepted "in a low degree". Both of these positions and more had been advocated by esteemed Puritan divines.¹⁷⁴

John Wesley's theologizing on this issue in comparison was neither any better nor any worse than these Puritans. What he had in common with

them was an increasing recognition that grace and faith may not always come in an abrupt lightning flash (as with the apostle Paul) as the Reformers were inclined to view it. But it may also occur through the faintest beginnings, "weak" at first until, in a moment of time, it was bright as the noon day sun.¹⁷⁵ Herein, John Wesley distinguishes himself from Rudolf Bultmann who viewed faith as arising only abruptly in the moment of decision.

John Wesley found language impotent and inadequate in trying to describe the eternal Spirit's work of faith in the terms of the empirical world. He said, "It is hard to find words in the language of men to explain the deep things of God."¹⁷⁶ The problem was and is how to describe the supernatural Eternal which is not of the temporal, spacial, empirical world in the terms of this world which lacks logical categories for it. How can one world which is seemingly mutually exclusive of another world be spoken of in the terms of that world? Finding no exact correlate, he found the analogy of sense experience to most closely approximate the experience of faith to which he and many others testified. However, he acknowledged that to demand a rigorous, more exacting philosophical account of the "manner" whereby "the real witness" was distinguished from human feeling was to make a demand which could never be answered.¹⁷⁷ "The things of God" which were from the Beyond were above human reason and analysis. The only way one could understand the things of God was to experience them as God revealed them to the enlivened soul.¹⁷⁸

This involves entertaining the paradox that what cannot be known in human experience can be known in human experience. Reason which is said to lack categories for the eternal things of God comes up with categories. In order for one to liken the originally unknown Beyond to "sense" - "feeling", "impression", "voice" - reason must be able to ascertain qualities or characteristics of Him and His work in order to be able to compare Him to the empirical, rational world.

Certainly Rudolf Bultmann would concur with John Wesley that trying to distinguish between God's act and human feeling is a vain exercise. However, Rudolf Bultmann would argue that in trying to account for the Spirit's inner activity as any other phenomenon in time and space he had erred before he had begun. To try to establish general statements about God whose validity would be universally true would be to speak from outside one's existence and from outside of God.

When John Wesley spoke of "the things of God" from the Beyond being above reason, he meant that God's mind, an intellect which is there in reality, far excelled the human's mental ability to grasp it. Moreover, God's reasoning was hidden from the unspiritual person. Nonetheless, there was Someone in existence in an existing realm who had a mind and reason which is subject to understanding if one only had the capability or the enabling to do so.

Rudolf Bultmann would agree with John Wesley that the Beyond was above human reason. However, He was not above reason in the sense that man lacked the right mental equipment to understand to some degree His thoughts. He was above reason in that reason alone to whatever degree or strength and in whatever context, whether in the unspiritual or spiritual man, was totally inappropriate and incapable of understanding God. Reason severed from a prior existential-ontological pre-understanding of existence -- which means any reason which tries to view God as an object in reality to be observed and analyzed just as any other object of the natural world -- would always miss the reality of God. Even the enlightened spiritual man who had an existential-ontological understanding but who began to approach God in such a rational fashion would sin and speak about God rather than from God. According to Rudolf Bultmann, human reason cannot form rational statements about God because, contrary to John Wesley's assumption, no such God exists that may be the object of rational analysis. Thus, for Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley's attempt to liken what the Holy Spirit works in His child to sense experience is to speak of God in a sinful way. It is trying to

speaking of God from without as some phenomenon which can be related to other phenomena.¹⁷⁹

Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley intersect each other at the point that both accept that true knowledge of God is given by God only when He reveals Himself by faith to the individual. For John Wesley, this was a supra-empirical experience in which the individual was consciously made aware by God of His favour toward that individual and of a consequent change of status which did not exclude a deepening and extending of rational understanding which was previously not available to him.

For Rudolf Bultmann, this was an existentiell knowing ("experience") in which as a result of faith in God's act, the individual became aware of being put into a new situation. However, contrary to John Wesley's view, this existentiell knowing did not comprehend the unveiling of any new insights, or any knowing of an objectified God in Himself, or any communication of rational knowledge not heretofore known.

The paradox and difficulty of Rudolf Bultmann's view is in maintaining that the God who is God and is revealed only in existential understanding cannot ever make Himself known to the individual outside of this understanding. For if God is, by Rudolf Bultmann's own working definition, the "reality determining all else",¹⁸⁰ how can He still be God when He cannot and does not determine and impact a part of reality, reason and the empirical world? Moreover, how can he call God "reality determining all else" (or "the power determining his (man's) concrete existence")¹⁸¹ when "all else" really determines Him? Is it credible to think of Him as "reality determining all else" when He cannot even determine Himself since He can never make Himself known apart from a particular human existential understanding? Is He really God if He can only and must always belong to an existential human understanding? If John Wesley found difficulty in explaining "the deep things of God" which occurred in the Christian's experience, his descendant has not found it much easier.

1. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 192.
2. Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 357f.
3. John Kent aptly characterizes John Wesley's mind as that of a lawyer's mind.
4. Wesley, Works, vol. 2, p. 161.
5. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 257; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 186.; vol. 3, p. 174; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 138; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 305; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 305; vol. 1, p. 255; Minutes, 1744, vol. 1, pp. 28f; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 333f; Wesley, Letters, vol.1, pp. 263, 255f.
6. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 358.
7. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 257.
8. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 139, 121.
9. Wesley, Minutes, pp. 4f.
10. Ibid., p. 5
11. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 230, 304.
12. Ibid., p. 161; Wesley, Minutes, p. 5.
13. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 230.
14. The day after he arrived in Georgia, August Spangenberg asked him point-blank, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" John Wesley replied, "I know He is the Saviour of the world." "True," said Mr. Spangenberg, "but do you know He has saved you?"; Wesley, Journal, vol. 1, p. 151.

John Wesley at this juncture could only affirm that Jesus was the world's Saviour. While this affirmed something about "the many", it spoke little about himself. It comprehended Jesus in relation to the collective many but not He in particular relation to John Wesley as an individual. Three years later in his testimonial on 24 May, 1738, he testified that "I felt I did trust in Christ ... an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." Wesley, Journal, vol. 1, p. 476.
15. Wesley, Minutes, pp. 28ff.
16. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 274, 286.
17. Ibid., pp. 274, 287.
18. Ibid., pp. 274, 286f.
19. Ibid., p. 288; John Wesley, The Oxford Edition of the Works of John Wesley, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, Vol. 26: Letters II: 1740-1755, ed. Frank Baker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 183; Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 290.

20. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, p. 183.
21. Ibid., p. 188; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 289.
22. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 61.
23. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 290f.
24. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 24.
25. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 261.
26. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 287.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p. 289.
29. Ibid., p. 282.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid. This word "immediately" did not appear in connection with "directly witnesses to my spirit" in the 1746 sermon "The Witness of the Spirit, I". However, it is added to the 1767 sermon "The Witness of the Spirit, II". Cf. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 274 with p. 287. Isaac Ambrose used the word "immediately" in his work.
32. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 276.
33. "His eyes are opened in quite another manner than before, even to see a loving, gracious God. While he is calling, 'I beseech thee show me thy glory,' he hears a voice in his inmost soul, ... I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.' And it is not long before the Lord descends in the cloud, and proclaims the name of the Lord.' Then he sees (but not with eyes of flesh and blood) 'The Lord, the Lord God; merciful and gracious ... forgiving iniquities and transgression and sin.'

"Heavenly, healing light now breaks in upon his soul. He 'looks on him whom he had pierced', and 'God ... shineth in his heart.' He sees 'the light of the glorious love of God, in the face of Jesus Christ'. He hath a divine 'evidence of things not seen' by sense ... more particularly of the love of God, of his pardoning love to him that believes in Jesus. Overpowered with the sight, his whole soul cries out, 'My Lord, and my God!' For he sees all his iniquities laid on him who 'bare them in his own body on the tree'; he beholds the Lamb of God taking away his sins. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 260f.
34. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 334.
35. Ibid., p. 375; In addition, Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 275; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, p. 203.

36. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 161f. His statement in 1738 would seem to contradict this. However, since this was a very early isolated statement and it is not clear what he means here, the general proposition remains. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 255.
37. Wesley, Minutes, p. 22.
38. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 192; Wesley, Minutes, p. 22; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 355.
39. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 355; Wesley, Letters, vol.1, p. 263.
40. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, pp. 263f.
41. Ibid., p. 255.
42. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 192; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, pp. 354f.
43. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, p. 263; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 162.
44. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, pp. 255f.
45. Ibid., pp. 255f, 263f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 192.
46. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 255f.
47. Ibid., p. 264.
48. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 192.
49. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 230.
50. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, I, ed. with an intro. by Robert W. Funk, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith, The Library of Philosophy and Theology, eds. John McIntyre and Ian Ramsey, 6th ed. (London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 54.
51. See below, p. 255.
52. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, p. 244.
53. For a relevant discussion, see the Appendix.
54. Ibid., pp. 32f.
55. Wesley, Minutes, pp. 22, 26, 32-34.
56. Ibid., pp. 32f.
57. His re-consideration of justifying faith was likely not attributed to this correspondence alone as has been suggested by Dr. John Whitehead. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 107f.
58. Ibid., p. 108; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, p. 254.
59. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 108

60. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 222.
61. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 108.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., p. 109.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 161f.
67. Ibid., p. 162.
68. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 17.
69. Wesley, Minutes, p. 32
70. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 161.
71. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 386. For other references to this definition, see: Wesley, Letters, vol.3, pp. 222, 359; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, pp. 34, 116, 117; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 184, 192.
72. Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 161. Varying slightly, he said that "living faith" was a "trust in him who 'for us paid our Ransom by his death, and for us fulfilled the law of his life.'"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 410.
73. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 163f.
74. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 144.
75. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 161.
76. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 117; Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 285.
77. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 305.
78. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 292.
79. Goodwin, Works, p. 349.
80. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, p. 254; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 108.
81. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, p. 575; Wesley, Works, vol. 2, p. 161.
82. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 161.
83. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 161f.
84. Ibid., p. 162.

85. Ibid.; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 382.
86. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 161. In the 1760 sermon "The New Birth", he affirmed that the one who was born again saw "the light of the glory of God," His glorious love, "in the face of Jesus Christ". As a result of this enlightenment, he was now capable of hearing the inward voice of God, saying, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 192.
87. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 358.
88. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 104. In 1760, he wrote to the editor of Lloyd's Evening Post that the one who believes is regenerate and he has the witness in himself (call it assurance): the Spirit itself witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 110.
89. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 305; vol. 8, p. 56.
90. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 358; Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 161ff.
91. Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 161f.
92. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 95; vol. 8, p. 56.
93. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 497.
94. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 358.
95. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 161.
96. Ibid., p. 161, 305; Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 422.
97. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 161.
98. Ibid., pp. 305, 161.
99. Ibid., pp. 161f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 358.
100. Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 57f; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 237.
101. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 236f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 146.
102. Wesley, Letters vol. 3, p. 305.
103. Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 423.
104. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 305; Wesley, Letters, vol: 5, p. 358.
105. Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 358, 253.
106. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 58.
107. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 253; Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 58.
108. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 255-60.

109. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 104.
110. Wesley, Minutes, pp. 22ff.
111. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 263; See also: Wesley, Minutes, p. 96; Fletcher, Works, vol. 2, pp. 249-253.
112. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 497.
113. Ibid.; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 236.
114. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 235f.
115. It had not always appeared in the context of the Scriptural phrase "fear God and worketh righteousness". For in 1745 John Wesley quoted St. Peter "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him," declaring in agreement "He is." Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 452.
116. Ibid.
117. See, Wesley, Minutes, p. 22.
118. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 235f.
119. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 104.
120. Wesley, Works, vol. 3, p. 497.
121. Ibid.
122. Norman Pettit, The Heart Prepared: Grace and Conversion in Puritan Spiritual Life (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 62ff.
123. Ibid., p. 61.
124. See his comments: Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief, Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 497.
125. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 236.
126. Ibid.
127. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 498.
128. Ibid.
129. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 237f.
130. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 584.
131. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 233.
132. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 159.
133. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 60.

134. Seeberg, History of Doctrines, vol. 2, pp. 234, 257. To "believe" meant that the believer was certain of God's word and experienced that it was powerful over him. Faith experienced God's word convincing and grasping itself in such a way that God's word took it captive. As Martin Luther stated, "You yourself in your own conscience must feel Christ himself." Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 60f. Only where this feeling and this experience were present could we become "sure of (our) faith", "sure of salvation"; Seeberg, History of Doctrines, vol. 2, p. 257.

However, this feeling was not necessarily identical with the act of faith. For "experience" may be wanting at times. Lacking experience, one may have to simply believe the word. For even though the believer feels the presence of his sins which do not seem to have been taken away, he must disregard these feelings and instead constantly insist that death, sin, and hell have been conquered; Althaus, Martin Luther, pp. 62f; Seeberg, History of Doctrines, vol. 2, p. 257. But, as a rule, experience accompanied every act of faith.

135. See below, p. 314. In his discussion of the Gospel of John's concept of faith, Rudolf Bultmann asserted that John rejected what he ascertained was the Gnostic teaching of the believer partaking of the divine nature. John knew nothing of the Gnostic ecstasy in which that of the other world became reality in this world; Rudolf Bultmann and Artur Weiser, Faith: Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament, trans. Dorothea M. Barton, ed. P. R. Ackroyd (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1961), pp. 106f.
136. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 50.
137. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 106f.
138. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 329f.
139. Judging from his commentaries on Galatians 4:6,7 and Romans 8:16, Martin Luther conceived of the testimony of the Holy Spirit as the trusting faith of the individual enabled by the Holy Spirit that he himself, through Christ, really has the forgiveness of sins; Luther, Lectures on Romans, p. 234; Luther, Commentary on Romans, p. 122.
The witness of the Spirit was the filial trust of our heart in God; Luther, Commentary on Romans, p. 122. Rather than our leaning upon our conscience and our feeling within us, according to Martin Luther, we must lean upon the promise and truth of God without us.
140. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 56.
141. Ibid., p. 59.
142. Ibid., p. 60.
143. Pettit, The Heart Prepared ..., p. 9; Edward Hindson, ed., Introduction to Puritan Theology: A Reader, foreword by James I. Packer (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, A Canon Press Book, 1976), pp. 11f.
144. Pettit, The Heart Prepared ..., pp. 9f.

145. Ibid., p. 10.
146. F. Ernest Stoeffler, The Rise of Evangelical Pietism, Studies in the History of Religions: Supplements to NVMEN, Vol. 9 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), p. 82
147. Wesley, ed., A Christian Library, vol. 5, pp. 381f, 388.
148. Toon, Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism, p. 17.
149. Wesley, Works, vol. 11, pp. 338, 399.
150. Ibid., p. 399.
151. See "The Witness of the Spirit, I" and "The Witness of Our Own Spirit", in Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 270, pp. 299ff; Pettit, The Heart Prepared..., p. 10.
152. Wesley, Journal, vol. 1, pp. 481ff.
153. Ibid., p. 482. See also Christian David's Testimony in John Wesley's Journal, vol. 2, p. 30. For already on June 6, 1738, he acknowledged having received a letter from a friend at Oxford (probably one of his friends of the Holy Club such as Charles Kinchin who came under the influence of the Moravians) who asserted "That no doubting could consist with the least degree of true faith." On November 16, 1738, John Wesley stated that Charles Kinchin preached the view which was expressed in this letter of June 6, 1738. See: Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, pp. 266f.
154. Already in June, 1738, he found I Corinthians 3:1 spoke of "babes in Christ". In addition, the apostle John wrote of the "young men" and "fathers".
155. His awareness of the Puritan conception of "degrees" of faith was alluded to in the Conference Minutes of June, 1747, in reference to their discussion of Divine assurance. The Conference recognized that most of the "serious dissenters" allowed a Divine assurance which they described as "the highest species or degree of faith". Wesley, Minutes, pp. 32f.
156. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, pp. 574f; Wesley, Journal, vol. 4, p. 425.
157. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 126. Some comments on justifying faith, assurance, and the testimony of the Spirit by Robert Bolton, John Preston and the lesser known non-conformist Isaac Ambrose were included in A Christian Library. Wesley, ed., A Christian Library, vol. 5, pp. 349, 378-91; vol. 4, pp. 399-408; vol. 9, pp. 29-32.
158. Wesley, Minutes, pp. 33f.
159. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 64.
160. Goodwin, Works, vol. 8, pp. 338f.
161. Ibid.
162. This was a common Puritan word. Pettit, The Heart Prepared..., p.7.

163. In making the distinction between justifying faith and "prevailing assurance", he explained that it was not his intention to encourage any to rest in faith without assurance. To do so would cause others to neglect to seek a further work of assurance thereby making a bad use of such a doctrine. Goodwin, Works, vol. 8, pp. 338f.
164. Owen C. Watkins, The Puritan Experience: Studies in Spiritual Autobiography (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), pp. 11f.
165. Ibid., p. 12.
166. Pettit, The Heart Prepared..., p. 10.
167. Wesley, ed., A Christian Library, vol. 5, pp. 380f.
168. Ibid., p. 381.
169. Goodwin, Works, vol. 8, p. 259.
170. Ibid., pp. 259f.
171. Ibid., p. 260. The concept of the soul having an "eye" which has the power of seeing into eternity appears in the Theological Germanica, trans. Susanna Winkworth (London: Stuart and Watkins, 1966), pp. 43f.
172. Goodwin, Works, vol. 8, p. 260f. Likewise, Isaac Ambrose wrote of the Spirit letting light into the person's heart and making the sinner see, by the eye He gave him, the things of God and that "Thou shalt be pardoned"; Wesley, ed., Christian Library, vol. 7, p. 392.
173. Pettit, The Heart Prepared..., pp. 61, 63.
174. Richard Rogers and Arthus Hildersam remained undecided about the person's spiritual status in this state; Richard Sibbes assigned to reprobation the person who was a "bruised reed", sensible of his sin and who entertained some notions of the Holy Spirit.

John Preston, on the other hand, viewed this person as having reached the point of regeneration. Pettit, The Heart Prepared..., p. 67f, 77.
175. Ibid., pp. 7f. See also chapter one.
176. Wesley, Works, ed-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 287.
177. Ibid., p. 282.
178. Ibid., p. 283.
179. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, I, pp. 53-65.
180. Ibid., p. 53
181. Ibid., p. 57.

CHAPTER FOUR

SAVING FAITH AS A GIFT/DECISION AND AS A STATE

SAVING FAITH AS A GIFT/DECISION

In regards to faith's nature, John Wesley affirmed two opposite truths which he attempted to hold in antinomy: that faith was both a gift of God and an act of man.¹ He, like both Catholics and Protestants, specifically in our case, Rudolf Bultmann, tried to account for the intersection of God's sovereign grace with the human will in regard to saving faith. All agreed both dimensions were involved but differed as to how.² In what manner John Wesley fell in between the Catholic and Reformed view is now for us to describe.

John Wesley zealously asserted the truth of both seemingly irreconcilable positions. In the classical Protestant tradition, he affirmed justifying faith was a privilege and sovereign free gift of God. At the same time, he affirmed the Catholic view that it was a decision of the human will empowered by God.³ Firstly, he everywhere consistently urged that faith was a free gift and, therefore, the work of God. "It is true repentance and faith are privileges and free gifts," he said.⁴ As the work of God, it was not the work of man.⁵ God is the sovereign dispenser and benefactor of justifying grace and even delays in giving grace for reasons only known to Him.⁶ Faith is "a disposition which God hath wrought" in man's heart.⁷ The free grace of God applies to sinners the benefits of Christ's atonement and righteousness by working in them faith.⁸

While faith was declared to be God's gift, faith was also conceived to be its seeming antithesis, a free act of the human will. It is "the duty of man to believe," John Wesley said.⁹ Faith was performed by man himself so that "believing is the act of man".¹⁰ Contrary to the Calvinists' claim, he insisted that this did not make faith a "work". Saving faith was a non-working activity of receiving what God offered. He illustrated this by explaining that one may

give another a sum of money on condition that he stretch out his hand to receive it.¹¹ To believe meant "Accept that faith which God is now ready to give" he stated.¹²

Nevertheless, though faith was also the act of man, it was a human act which could be performed only by the power of God. Namely, he stated, "God gives me the power to believe."¹³ "For no one ever did believe unless God gave him the power," he said.¹⁴ Consequently, the first motion of the will was not from human nature but from grace. In any case, John Wesley was adamant that as a result of Christ's death all persons were free to choose to comply with or to resist the grace of God.¹⁵ Gainsaying the Calvinist argument of election and irresistible grace, he held tenaciously that the grace which brought faith into the soul was not irresistible and may be and had been resisted both before and after the moment of faith.¹⁶

Indeed, though "God gives me the power to believe", He does not believe for me, John Wesley declared. Though "He works faith in me ... is it not I that believe?" asked he.¹⁷ Though God through Jesus Christ enabled the fallen will to decide for or against grace, he nevertheless accepted that there was a sense in which the individual himself was left with the responsibility of making his own decision. In one sweep, his scheme set forth that God in the atoning Christ had restored to all fallen men liberty of will. This opened and allowed persons the possibility to chose for themselves to stretch out their hands to receive and accept the faith which God was now ready to give. In one sense, faith entailed two, Divine movements and one human movement. God presented the gift of faith and liberated the will to receive it. Believing constituted man using his empowered will to accept the gift of faith. He wrote in 1787, "When we urge any to believe, we mean, 'Accept that faith which God is now ready to give.' Indeed, believing is the act of man, but it is the gift of God."¹⁸

John Wesley knew he was walking the knife-edge in affirming this position. Consequently, he had to protect himself from abysses on either side.

The classical Protestant emphasis of faith as gift was typically aligned with the doctrines of total depravity and unconditional election. The fallen man who had a completely unfree will and could therefore do nothing toward his salvation was justified by God's gift of faith. The question that plagued theology was that if man's will was completely incapacitated and must solely rely upon God's gracious gift to mete out faith for salvation, why did God not give the gift to all, thereby saving all persons? The answer present in Martin Luther and classically expounded by John Calvin was that God had from eternity especially chosen select persons to be saved from total depravity. As a result, these chosen people were swept to salvation by the gracious act of God, their wills concurring but not choosing of their own volition this redemption. John Wesley vehemently rejected this understanding as disavowing human free will.

On the other hand, if John Wesley allowed that fallen men had free will, he had to face the difficulties of how those whose wills which were completely bound could choose salvation. Moreover, if they were free, how could it be said that faith was God's gracious gift. The Catholics who accepted that persons had the free will to choose salvation could do so on the basis that they rejected total depravity, believing man after the Fall still had the God-invested ability in his nature to freely choose. Strictly speaking, John Wesley rejected this view. He avowed with Martin Luther and John Calvin that fallen man was totally corrupt so that his will had neither any good inclinations nor the power to choose good. However, he diverged from them by advocating that the cross benefited all persons by restoring to them the ability to decide.

How did he attempt to resolve the dilemma of holding two dialectical theses? He stated that to say that every person can believe to justification "when he will is contrary to plain matter of fact".¹⁹ This was his acknowledgement of the axiom that God in His sovereignty bestowed faith according to his inscrutable will. Experience confirmed that man could not believe when he will".²⁰ The timing was in God's possession. The reasons

why God delayed in giving faith were the secrets of his government which he kept to himself.²¹ Be that as it may, if the timing of faith was finally up to God, one could nevertheless be certain that God had not predetermined to withhold faith from certain persons. He was prepared and at hand to work faith in every person.

Nonetheless, though man may not believe when he will, John Wesley was certain that, to cite a favorite quote of his, "every man may believe if he will". He said that "if you deny that every man can believe if he will, you run into absolute decrees".²² Thus, he affirmed the axiom seemingly antithetical and mutually exclusive to the sovereignty of God: one may believe if he determines he will. If a person seeks faith in the appointed ways, sooner or later the Lord's power will be present. Further, he stated that in order of thinking rather than in order of time God's working went first. The believer was to accept the faith that God was ready to give. Man's believing was strengthened by God's power so that though it was man's act, it was, nevertheless, God's gift.²³

He recognized that this was a matter with "a precipice on each side". Moreover, he acknowledged, "there will be always something in the matter which we cannot well comprehend or explain".²⁴ In 1787 he advised a Methodist preacher, "Take it simply without reasoning, and hold it fast."²⁵

EVALUATION

The question of how faith could be what God wrought in man and yet man's free decision was equally a concern of Rudolf Bultmann. He asked if "man is completely dependent on God's grace ... how can we still speak of his being a free agent"?²⁶ As Protestantism and John Wesley before him, he affirmed that faith was a God-wrought "gift" in the sense that faith could only become a possibility through and since God's gracious saving act in Christ.²⁷ The proclamation of the saving event created the historical possibility of faith.

Though faith is said by Paul to "come" and "to be revealed", this does not rob it of its decision-character as "obedience".²⁸ Like John Wesley, he asserted faith is also a "free act". Herein Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley share a common commitment equally integral to each one's theology. In the first place, they both argue for a dialectical faith which is both God-wrought and free-decision. In the second place, the insistence upon man's free decision was a characteristic hallmark of both John Wesley's "Arminian" interpretation and Rudolf Bultmann's existentialist interpretation. Their juncture at this point draws them together into a company which stands over and against the Reformers.²⁹

How is faith paradoxically a free act and also awareness of being chosen?³⁰ How can faith be a free act of decision and yet the believer not glory in himself as fulfilling the condition for the reception of grace? Herein, the answer demonstrates the clash of his and John Wesley's opposing basic theological and philosophical assumptions. Rudolf Bultmann asserts that thinking of both at the same time is "impossible" if one thinks speculatively of being "chosen" as one would in a "doctrine of predestination". He alleges that persons who ask how it is possible for faith to be both at the same time desire to see faith "from the outside". Consequently, they get themselves into "insoluble difficulties".³¹ Herein Rudolf Bultmann is thinking of those theologians, including John Wesley, who study the subject as they would an entity in the empirical world.

However, if one interprets (as he does) the assertion of being chosen "as a confession of faith", then thinking on the subject is possible.³² Specifically, when faith occurs in the free decision for God, an awareness that God is being allowed to act arises.³³ This awareness that one is chosen exists "only in so far as there is faith".³⁴ Therefore, every conception of the idea of election outside of faith is labeled by him as speculative or mythological and is thereby to be discounted.

Though Rudolf Bultmann speaks of faith as being "God-wrought", he does not accept as John Wesley that this means there is a cosmic, sovereign Being who ultimately determines, dispenses, and directs according to His own unsearchable counsel an outflow of power and influence which inspires or produces faith within a person. He says Paul does not describe "faith as inspired, attributable to the 'Spirit'".³⁵

While John Wesley does not deny that preaching is a means that God uses to produce faith, to deny that the living, supernatural God is the power alone which enlivens and makes the means efficacious reduces proclamation to an empty ritual - "a poor, dead, empty thing."³⁶ He proclaimed, "And all outward things, unless he work in them and by them, are mere weak and beggarly elements We know that there is no inherent power ... in the letter of Scripture read, the sound thereof heard, ... but that, it is God alone who is the giver of every good gift"³⁷

Faith is produced only by One coming from the outside to create within man an inner disposition. For John Wesley there was no power to save but in the Spirit of God. To contemplate anything otherwise signifies to him "dead orthodoxy". It would be placing trust in a work and not He who was the author of grace.³⁸

For Rudolf Bultmann there was in fact no actual choosing of a believer by a so-called supernatural God. Being "chosen" was entirely in the perception of the believer. Outside of the believer's own understanding such a choosing did not exist but was only mythological thinking and human projection.

In relation to the discussion of faith as "gift" and "decision", how does Rudolf Bultmann treat the issue of the ability of the will to choose self-surrender? Though the literal words in such texts as John 6:44, 18:37, and 8:43ff suggest that the unbelieving Jews are "unable to believe, because they come from the devil", this is not the meaning according to Rudolf Bultmann. Rather, no man's will is disparate from his action. No one can act otherwise than in accordance with his being; one's being is constituted in action. It is

man's being which is called into decision.³⁹

From where does one get the ability, the power, and the freedom of will to make one's own response of faith to God? Why do some people resolve to believe and others do not? John Wesley maintained that the will of natural man which was enslaved to sin as a result of the Fall had been liberated by the atoning death of Jesus Christ. However, Rudolf Bultmann, diverging from Martin Luther, did not know that every natural person's will was necessarily enslaved to sin. For him the possibility of free choice was an a priori of human existence.⁴⁰ He does not attempt to justify his assumption of free agency on the grounds of any liberating power of Jesus' factual death through the Spirit as John Wesley does. Again, in contrast to John Wesley's assumption, there is for him in factuality no existent Person or power enabling man's will to choose the faith which He desires to give. To assert such could only be a statement of faith. It is a statement about the way one experiences something rather than a statement about the way things are in themselves.

Whatever the case, both positions allow that man has the power to decide for himself. However, given his own philosophical pre-understanding and existential faith, Rudolf Bultmann in the vein of Christian tradition acknowledges that man is dependent on God's grace for faith.

Be that as it may, one could argue that since the proclamation is not grace until one resolves to accept it as such, God's grace as such is dependent on man's prior free act. From this angle, he is aligned more with Catholic teaching, excepting the fact that even they recognize the need for sanctifying grace preceding faith. Moreover, from the historical Christian perspective, his formulation may be reduced to an agnostic existential or humanistic assertion.

Though he gives little explanation of how the two dialectical tenets may be reconciled, John Wesley's assumption that they both must be held together in creative tension is not to be discounted. In affirming both, he was attempting

to take seriously both the Lordship of God and the responsibility of man to respond. His acceptance of the Scriptures as insisting upon both is not an arbitrary conclusion but one which may be seen as being manifest in the Scriptures. His position avoids the pitfalls of the two either/or Christian positions and does not entertain a more serious seeming paradox than the Catholic and traditional Protestant views.

JUSTIFICATION AS A STATE

Throughout his entire evangelical ministry, John Wesley understood justifying faith to be the inauguration of a radically new state of life, of being and becoming. In his 1738 sermon "Salvation by Faith", he stated that the one "thus justified ... or saved by faith is indeed 'born again'. He is 'born again of the Spirit' unto a new 'life which is hid with Christ in God.'"⁴¹ Further, as a "newborn babe" he receives "the sincere milk of the word" and grows thereby, going "from faith to faith" and "from grace to grace" until he becomes a "perfect man".⁴²

That he accepted justification as a state is repeatedly recognized throughout his evangelical career. In 1745 he indicated to Thomas Church that "justification sometimes meant a state of acceptance with God".⁴³ Though by the 1770's he became guarded in speaking of a justified state, nonetheless, he still acknowledged that the "state of a justified person is inexpressibly great and glorious".⁴⁴

The new state of life of being justified consisted of a fundamental alteration in a person's "vertical", transcendent relation with God. One who was once in a state of disfavour with God at justification was put into a state of acceptance with Him.⁴⁵ In 1748 he spoke of justifying faith eliciting justification which was a "relative change" in "our outward relation to God". Specifically, one who was previously an enemy of God now became a child of God in justification.⁴⁶

Justifying faith was the fountainhead of the state of "proper salvation" which commenced instantaneously at the moment of justification.⁴⁷ This resulting "proper salvation" entailed both a state of being justified and a state of being sanctified. The instantaneous moment of justification was the definite demarcation between the "before" and the "after", the threshold at which one died to the "old" creation and became a "new" creation, the "corrupted" image becoming the "restored" image. Though the states of being justified and sanctified had wholly distinct natures, they were directly related to one another and were inseparable. They occurred together simultaneously.⁴⁸ The state of being justified, though distinct in thought from the state of being sanctified, implied a state of being sanctified, and vice versa. Namely, whoever was justified was also born of God; whoever was born of God was also justified.⁴⁹ The fortune of each state of being was directly and inseparably tied to the fortune of the other state of being. Be that as it may, while one may say that by losing justification one automatically forfeited sanctification, the reverse may not always be true.

"Proper salvation" was conceived of as a state of linearly progressing salvation as well as a state of being. Salvation progressed from one degree to the next degree, from lower to higher. As his sermon "Salvation by Faith" said, one went from "faith to faith", from "grace to grace". Comprehended in the state of justification were the various, generally progressive gradations of faith from "the assurance of faith" to "clear assurance", to "full assurance", and finally to the "full assurance of perseverance" which excluded all doubt and fear of final salvation. The "degrees" of faith directly corresponded to the Scriptural analogy of the various stages of human development, from the "new-born babe", to "little children", to "young men", to "Fathers", to the "perfect man", mature in the faith.⁵⁰ In 1745, he states that from the time one was justified, salvation gradually increased in one's soul. Herein he used a botanical metaphor of the development of a seed to blade to ear to full corn in the ear.⁵¹

In 1782 he exhorted that all the light and love we received in the moment of justification or sanctification should increase more and more to the perfect day.⁵² The state of sanctification related positively to the progressive stages of justification. For example, generally speaking, the "fathers" who experienced perfection enjoyed the plerophory, or "full assurance of hope".⁵³

THE FRUITS OF FAITH

Let us examine further John Wesley's understanding of the nature of the justified state issuing from justifying faith. He maintained that if a person had received justifying faith, then the resultant state of justification brought immediately with it certain "fruits" and "marks" which necessarily would be "felt".⁵⁴ As "living faith" was experienced, so these fruits would be "felt" or "experienced". Describing these "felt" inward feelings as "sensible operations", he stated they are "as perceptible to the heart" and sensible in the soul "as sensible objects are to the senses".⁵⁵ Just as one felt the wind upon one's body, one knew he was under the Holy Spirit's guidance by "feeling it in your soul".⁵⁶ The "marks" "must be felt (if it ((love)) is in the soul) as much as fire upon the body".⁵⁷

There were other attendants of true faith in the justified believer's heart besides the testimony of the Holy Spirit which he insisted must also be felt. In 1759 he affirmed that "we believe that love, joy, peace are inwardly felt, or they have no being; and that men are satisfied they have grace, first by feeling these, and afterward by their outward actions."⁵⁸ As evidenced particularly in the 1740's, he made a point to stress that the fruit of living faith was an immediate and constant issue inextricably bound to faith.⁵⁹ If a person believes, then he has the marks and fruit of faith.⁶⁰ However, by the early 1780's when John Wesley's doctrine of assurance had undergone adjustment, he could be more restrained in his pronouncement. Appealing to Robert Bolton's analysis, he told John Atlay in 1781, "Faith may subsist for a time with very little joy, especially if there was little sorrow before."⁶¹

Nevertheless, joy was still present with living faith.

The "fruits" that issued from living faith were typically those enumerated in Galatians 5:22ff. The ones which he generally highlighted were "love, joy, peace", salvation from the fear of God's wrath, power over sin, and "meekness". The 1744 Conference established that the immediate fruits of justifying faith were the following: "Peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin."⁶² He insisted always that by faith alone the "blessed love of God" could be "shed abroad in our hearts" enabling us to love one another.⁶³ In 1741 he asserted true faith could not subsist without the mark of, among other marks, "a feeling sense of God's love to me, a sinner".⁶⁴

With the experience of living faith and love sprang also the experience of "the peace of God which passeth all understanding".⁶⁵ "Dost thou thus believe?" asked John Wesley. "Then the peace of God is in thy heart" he replied.⁶⁶

If "love" and "peace" were fruit always married to righteousness, so was "joy". "Joy", along with "peace", should never be separated from righteousness. Like both righteousness and peace, "joy in the Holy Ghost" was given only to those who were justified by faith.⁶⁷ "Joy in the Holy Ghost" was an inextricable part of the new state of justification. Moreover, "true religion is 'righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost'" he said.⁶⁸ The joy which resulted from justification was a joy not unfelt, yet a joy, in the words of Scripture, "unspeakable".⁶⁹ In 1781 he was willing to concede that faith may subsist "for a time with very little joy".

Another concomitant of justification commonly highlighted by John Wesley was salvation from the fear of God's wrath. The one saved from guilt was saved from the fear of punishment.⁷⁰ "Thou art no longer afraid of hell, or death, or him that had once the power of death, the devil: no, nor painfully afraid of God himself; only thou hast a tender, filial fear of offending him," wrote John Wesley in 1746.⁷¹ Moreover, the believer was even saved from the

fear of falling away, though not of the possibility.⁷²

Another immediate and constant fruit of justification which John Wesley relentlessly stressed was power over sin. From the hour of believing, sin had no more dominion over the believer.⁷³ Power over sin was such a part of believing existence that it could not be separated from "true, living, Christian faith". Power over sin meant power to triumph over outward sin of every kind as well as inward sin.⁷⁴

THE NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS

There would be some truth in the ironic assertion that John Wesley was a man converted from "salvation by good works" who spent the rest of his life contending for them. He spent the early dawning of the Revival in defending himself from the charge that he undermined good works by preaching faith. He spent the dusk of the Revival in defending himself from the charge that he undermined faith in stressing good works. His 1738 conversion altered his understanding of the sequence of good works in the theological scheme of salvation but it changed little his passion for the necessity of good works. Good works were faith's "proper fruits, the marks whereby it is known."⁷⁵ Whereas they may be considered as either internal or external, the outward works are more properly called "good works".⁷⁶ He argued using a favorite phrase that whoever had true religion would be "zealous of good works".⁷⁷ From 1738 onward he affirmed that a true, living faith was "necessarily productive of all good works and all holiness".⁷⁸ Good works were joined to faith as an effect is joined to its cause.⁷⁹ Good works were so vital that without them, assuming there was time to perform them, none could be finally saved.⁸⁰ If there be no immediate opportunity of practising them but "a sincere desire and resolution to perform them", that is sufficient for the present. However, good works "must follow after as soon as occasion offers".⁸¹

The phrase "good works" or "works" was more or less synonymous with "holiness".⁸² Likewise, the term "faith working by love" noted faith working

itself out in "holiness".⁸³ These three expressions were generally used interchangeably to speak of the qualitative, inherent change that necessarily commenced at justification. These expressions encompassed an "inward" aspect and an "outward" aspect.⁸⁴ The "inward" aspect denoted "our inward tempers", our "inward qualities or dispositions"; that is, "the love of God is shed abroad in the heart".⁸⁵ The "outward" aspect signified "our outward behaviour", namely "keeping His commandments" or "holiness of ... Life".⁸⁶ Sanctification could be distinguished from "good works" because it implied "a continued course of good works springing from holiness of heart".⁸⁷ Nevertheless, taken in the proper sense, "good works" referred to the external, outward works.⁸⁸

In any case, John Wesley's axiom was that anyone who had "true faith" is "holy both in heart and life". "True faith" is the sense of the love of the pardoning God given to us in the atoning Christ. Only upon receiving this pardoning love from God in faith can reciprocal love for Him and for neighbor arise. Only from this love meted out by the Father can truly good works and holiness commence.⁸⁹

Moreover, having this divine love which arises from true faith, the believer has consequently all genuine virtue which produces every divine and amiable temper.⁹⁰ He is renewed in the image of his mind, born again, having the whole image of God.⁹¹ This is the true faith by which God's power living there "purifies the heart" from sins - from pride, anger, desire - "from all unrighteousness", "from all filthiness of flesh and spirit", "from the whole of the carnal mind which is enmity against God".⁹²

Further, the sanctified do not "continue in sin". Being "dead unto sin" and "alive unto God", "sin hath not dominion over them" so they are "freed from sin" and therefore do not serve it.⁹³ The love resulting from true faith fulfills the "whole negative 'law'" comprehended in the saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". Not only is the negative law fulfilled but so is the positive law. This love continually incites the believer to do good in every

possible degree to all people.⁹⁴

Finally, he declared that the Christian should expect to be "perfected in love" and "saved from all sin" in this life such that the "evil nature", "the body of sin", "the evil root" is destroyed.⁹⁵ In this "full salvation" God would purify the heart "from all sin" and "fill it with all holiness".⁹⁶

Why were "good works" "absolutely necessary to salvation"? Though John Wesley affirmed that justification was a state, he rejected the strict Calvinist interpretation of this state. For him, it was not an irrevocable and irrepealable persevering state from which it was impossible for the justified to "fall". For him justification did not necessarily stretch invincibly on an unintermittent, unbroken line from the moment of justification to death irrespective of the works which did or did not follow. Contrarily, for John Wesley, at the moment of justification, one entered a state whose very existence, continuance and progress depended on continued faith as well as "good works". The 1744 Conference asked, "Are works necessary to the continuance of faith?" They answered "Without a doubt; for a man may forfeit the free gift of God, either by sins of omission or commission." The follow-up question was, "Can faith be lost, but for want of works?" The answer, "It cannot but through disobedience".⁹⁷

It is obvious from these passages cited in text and endnote that John Wesley consistently maintained that a justified person could lose the gift of justifying faith and cease to continue in faith, thereby losing his justification and favour with God. In conclusion, good works must necessarily be added to faith in order to retain the grace already received.

"Good works" were also necessary in order to "grow in grace" and "the image of God". Moreover, not only could one not "grow in grace", but he could not reasonably expect to be sanctified fully if he willingly neglected "good works". Herein, John Wesley's attempt at holding in tension the two seemingly opposing truths, faith and works is evident. He affirmed that justifying faith must elicit good works if it is true, living faith; yet, he avowed

that fundamental Methodist doctrine insisted that before all things it was necessary to hold faith.⁹⁸ Moreover, he maintained that perfection was always wrought in the soul by faith, by a simple, instantaneous act.⁹⁹

The dilemma was, how could works be necessary to sanctification if sanctification was always wrought by instantaneous faith? His attempted resolution paralleled the pattern he used earlier to answer how repentance was also a condition (though not the only absolute condition) of salvation. His early debate with the Moravians centred on what a person must do (or not do) during the interval between seeking justifying faith and receiving it. He vigorously contended that during this interim one must repent and "bring forth fruits meet for repentance", assuming there was time and opportunity.¹⁰⁰ Regarding sanctification, he readily recognized that there was an interval or "an intermediate state" between the first moment of justification and the instantaneous event of entire sanctification.¹⁰¹ "But do we change directly from our first love into the highest union with God?" he asked in 1756. "Surely not," he answered.¹⁰² Sanctification which began at the moment of justification gradually increased until one was entirely sanctified.¹⁰³

As to the manner of sanctification, he urged that faith was "the only condition of sanctification" so that "without faith no man is sanctified".¹⁰⁴ However, he also recognized the spiritual reality: in spite of faith, there was usually a waiting period until entire sanctification.¹⁰⁵ So, the resulting issue was how one was to "wait" for entire sanctification.

On the one hand, one was to wait in faith. One must "believe always" in order to walk in the fullness of love.¹⁰⁶ In 1776 he commended Joseph Benson for pressing believers to aspire after "the full liberty of the children of God". Nonetheless, he warned him they must not give up their faith in order to do it. They must be urged to go from faith to faith; from weak faith to strong faith which not only conquers but casts out sin.¹⁰⁷ Notwithstanding, it was equally true in the meantime that God appointed his children to wait for "complete salvation" through "repentance", including the fight of faith and "the

practice of all good works, works of piety, as well as works of mercy".¹⁰⁸ In 1774 he stated, "There are two general ways wherein it pleases God to lead His children to perfection - doing and suffering."¹⁰⁹ How could "repentance", the "fight of faith", and repentance's fruits be necessary to full salvation if full salvation was by faith? He argued that though repentance and its fruits were necessary to full salvation they were not necessary in the "same sense" or in the "same degree" with faith.¹¹⁰ They were not necessary in the same degree because these fruits were only necessary "conditionally, if there be time and opportunity for them. Otherwise a man may be sanctified without them. But he cannot be sanctified without faith".¹¹¹ Moreover, he may have much repentance and good works yet all this does not avail till he believes. "But the moment he believes, with or without those fruits, yea, with more or less of this repentance, he is sanctified," he said.¹¹² Nonetheless, though one who expected to be sanctified would expect to be sanctified by faith, in the meantime, he must know that faith would not be given but to them that obey.¹¹³

The relationship between justifying faith, consequent repentance and sanctifying faith of the believer was perhaps best described in his 1767 sermon "The Repentance of Believers". He stated, "repentance and faith exactly answer each other".¹¹⁴ The justified person continued to believe in him "that loved thee, and gave himself for thee".¹¹⁵ As he continued in the justified state, he felt the pangs of remaining sin in his heart. "By repentance we feel the sin remaining in our hearts," he said.¹¹⁶ This repentance in turn calls upon faith to appropriate God in Christ for purification of this indwelling sin.¹¹⁷ He said, "By faith we receive the power of God in Christ, purifying our hearts and cleansing our hands".¹¹⁸ Moving from a faith in Him who saves one from condemnation to the faith in Him who is both able and "willing" to save from all uncleanness is going "from faith to faith".¹¹⁹

FINAL JUSTIFICATION

John Wesley vigorously maintained that holiness and good works were necessary to final justification in a similar way they were obligatory to entire sanctification. This raises an important matter in regards to his teaching on final justification. The issue of a twofold justification, a first justification in this life and a second at the Last Judgment, seems to have been addressed first by him in 1739. He reported in his Journal of being informed one day how "many wise and learned men", supposedly in keeping with the Articles and Homilies, held a twofold justification.¹²⁰ His less than carefully worded criticism of this position was later brought against him as an example of his theological self-contradiction. Though making a final judgment is difficult as to whether or not his above 1739 Journal account reflects a current ignorance or studied rejection of the doctrine of double-justification, based upon the reasons given in the endnote, one would best conclude it reflected ignorance.¹²¹

In June, 1741, he noted in his Journal his reading of Bishop George Bull's Harmonia Apostolica and Bishop Bull's affirmation "That there are two justifications".¹²² Curiously, he made no judgment regarding the Bishop's affirmation and certainly did not take him to task as he had done with his 1739 disputants. However, in July, 1771, in his letter "To Several Preachers and Friends", he confesses he "was very angry with Bishop Bull because the Bishop distinguished "our first from our final justification".¹²³ It would appear from this admission taken together with the previous statement in 1739 that he accepted at these early dates only one justification and that he was uncertain of, or rejected the distinction of, a present and final justification, even though later he might be able to reconcile his disparate remarks.¹²⁴

At any rate, in late 1744 he read Richard Baxter's Aphorismes which he found providential and in which Richard Baxter asserted two justifications.¹²⁵ This work touched on the subject and perhaps convinced him of a legitimate, evangelical differentiation between a first and final justification. Thereupon,

no later than 1745, he began to make in passing an obligatory qualification between justifications. In his 1745 Farther Appeal he noticed that justification "sometimes means our acquittal at the last day. But this is altogether out of the present question..."¹²⁶ In his 1746 sermon "Justification By Faith" he commented that in Romans 2:13 the Apostle seemed to "refer our justification to the sentence of the great day".¹²⁷ Likewise did the Lord himself in Matthew 12:36f. However, he concluded, generally Paul spoke in his writings of the initial justification.¹²⁸ This is the kind of qualification one would have expected him to have made in 1739 if he had then accepted the distinction or been conversant with it.

The explicit mention of a second justification remained of mainly parenthetical interest to John Wesley until 1756 when he responded to James Hervey's Theron and Aspasio. From 1756 onward, the express mention rather than the assumption of a final acceptance figured increasingly in the discussions. Correspondingly, his understanding of final acceptance became more fully developed in print. In his remarks on James Hervey's work, he stated that the foundation of our "final acceptance" was "the merits of Christ".¹²⁹ "Yet," he said, "we obey in order to our final acceptance through His merits; and in this sense by obeying we 'lay a good foundation that we may attain eternal life'."¹³⁰ He explained that the keeping of the commandments was "undoubtedly the way to, though not the cause of, eternal life."¹³¹

Two of John Wesley's pet doctrines, the possibility of falling from present justification and the complementary doctrine of the necessity of continuing faith and works, were protected by his understanding of a second justification.¹³² Just the same, he repudiated James Hervey's contention that his theology made works a condition of present justification.¹³³ Nonetheless, he stated, "It is undoubtedly true that nothing avails for our final salvation without καὶνὴ κτίσις, 'a new creation', and, consequent thereon, a sincere, uniform keeping of the commandments of God".¹³⁴ In the 1764

Preface to A Treatise on Justification, he again reiterated that "the only cause of our present and eternal salvation" was "what Christ has done and suffered for us".¹³⁵

Therefore, from no later than 1745 onward a "final acceptance" or second justification was incorporated into his theological scheme. "Final justification" was more an assumed doctrine than one upon which he elaborated or gave frequent specific mention. His understanding of it is gleaned from occasional scattered remarks, from his abridgement of Richard Baxter's Aphorismes and from the discussion of the controversial Minutes of 1770.

The most systematic and complete treatment of the doctrine in John Wesley's writings was his 1745 abridgement of Richard Baxter's Aphorismes. One must be cautious in seeking in every sentence material for John Wesley's view since he disclaimed defending Richard Baxter's every expression. However, as late as 1772 he re-affirmed that he generally approved of Richard Baxter's sense.¹³⁶

In this tract, it was asserted that justification was a single act begun and ended upon believing; yet, it was also a continued act, though complete, which was still "in doing" and must continue "till the final Justification at the Judgment Day".¹³⁷ This final justification consisted of the Judge Christ's verdict on the individual Christian existence which ensued from the moment of the first justification. It was conditioned upon persevering faith and "sincere Obedience", that is, "according to our Works". His proposition stated, "Perseverance is faithful Obedience, doth, both in Nature and Time, go before our complete and final Justification, and that as Part of the Condition of obtaining it."¹³⁸

This teaching assumed, contrary to common Calvinism, that justification was revocable and also that obedience and good works must be annexed to faith as a condition for Christ the Judge's favorable sentence at the great Judgment.¹³⁹ John Wesley asserted that in Jesus Christ's final Judgment He would show forth His hatred of sins and His love of obedience.¹⁴⁰ He felt this

explanation was the only fair treatment of the Scriptural evidence.¹⁴¹

Moreover, he accepted that the contrary doctrine which declared one must not perform our duties "for Life and Salvation, but only from Life and Salvation" would cause the collapse of the use of good works and obedience in order to full salvation.¹⁴² Similarly, the contrary doctrine would greatly tend "to relax their Diligence" of obedience.¹⁴³ Both he and Richard Baxter in his day saw their doctrine more or less as God's stay against Antinomianism.¹⁴⁴

In the days following the August 1770 Conference, John Wesley's understanding, which had been present in his theology since at least 1745, became the subject of a great outpouring of criticism from the strict Calvinists. It was provoked by one of the 1770 Conference's responses to the question of how "to revive the work of God, where it is decayed".¹⁴⁵ The Conference determined, as it also had done in 1744, that it had been leaning "too much toward Calvinism".¹⁴⁶ As a counteractive to this "grand hindrance of the work of God", John Wesley and the Conference spoke without reservation that "works" were a necessary condition of everlasting life.

Once again he reaffirmed in bald statements what he all along had maintained that man must be "faithful in the unrighteous mammon" as a condition of receiving "the true riches".¹⁴⁷ Likewise, he did not shy away from using the battle-scarred aphorism of the seventeenth-century antinomian controversy (used by Richard Baxter in the Aphorismes): "every believer, till he comes to glory, works for as well as from life."¹⁴⁸

Later, in response to the Countess of Huntingdon and Walter Shirley's circular letter protesting his "injurious" Minutes and "dreadful heresy", John Wesley in July, 1771, attempted to clarify those terse, unexplained Conference statements.¹⁴⁹ In regards to the expression "working for life", he said he spoke only of the believer.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, when the Conference said that "He that now believes in Christ with a loving and obedient heart" is "now accepted of God", they did not refer "to the gaining the favour of God, but the being therein, at any given point of time".¹⁵¹ Further, when he stated that salvation was not by

"the merit of works, but by works as a condition" he meant by "salvation", "final salvation".¹⁵² Here again he reaffirmed what was consistently weaving through his writings from 1745: that "both inward good works (loving God and our neighbour) and outward good works (keeping His commandments)" were a condition of final salvation.¹⁵³

The critics' ostensible, root concern with the Conference's propositions was their perceived assertion of "salvation by works". Since it was asserted that we must "work for life", and that works were a necessary "condition" of God's acceptance, they concluded John Wesley was advocating that justification was earned and merited by these works.

John Wesley attempted to treat the condition of works of final justification in the same manner as we have shown he treated "repentance" prior to, and after faith. In his 1756 letter to James Hervey he explained that "the merits of Christ" were the foundation, the cause of our final acceptance. Christ's merits earned it. While works were not the cause, they were the way to proceed to eternal life.¹⁵⁴ As John Fletcher reiterated in his "Checks", though "works" were something that must be done in order to find the second justification, they did not merit this justification.¹⁵⁵

In the 1770 Minutes and in the debate following, he reaffirmed that "works" did not "merit" salvation.¹⁵⁶ Herein, he broached the term "merit" in relation to works as the condition for final salvation. He acknowledged that Methodists had been "so dreadfully afraid" of the word "merit".¹⁵⁷ Indeed, heretofore, he seems not to have used it except in reference to Christ's atonement. In August, 1771, he confessed in writing to Charles Wesley, "I do not use the word 'merit'. I never did, neither do I now contend for the use of it."¹⁵⁸ In the 1770 Minutes, he defined the sense in which the term "merit" was to be used: that which deserves reward. He affirmed that, "We are rewarded according to our works."¹⁵⁹ He conceded that he could not distinguish the expressions "according to our works" and "because of our works" from the expressions "for the sake of our works" and "secundum

merita operum", "as our works deserve".¹⁶⁰ In his defense of this, he offered Abraham as an example of one who was told "Because thou hast done this thing, ... in blessing I will bless thee"¹⁶¹

What are we to make of John Wesley's teaching on the good works of the believer and its relationship to reward and final justification? It is abundantly clear that John Wesley asserted the following: that no one could be finally saved by a faith which did not necessarily produce good works (inward good tempers and outward good behaviour) (there being time and opportunity);¹⁶² and the absolute inability of the power of human nature to think, speak, or act rightly. In 1770, he emphasized that the original, Methodist, grand principle was: there is no power (by nature) and no merit in man.¹⁶³

These generalizations accurately correspond to the substance of his printed lifetime teaching. Judging from these, the Council of Trent would place him under "anathema". However, one must proceed with caution here. John Wesley devoted no essay to "final justification" or its relationship to "merit" and "reward" and wrote comparatively little on the subject. When he did address himself to the question, his remarks remained terse. He seemed rather content to leave it this way. In conclusion, John Wesley's position vis à vis the views of reformed Protestants and Roman Catholics remains ambiguous. Was he the "papist" the strict Calvinist made him out to be? The Council of Trent anathematized those who said good works of the justified man were gifts of God to the extent of denying they were also good merits of the justified man himself.¹⁶⁴ On the basis of this pronouncement, it would appear that he was at odds with the Council. While both Trent and he agreed that good works were God's gifts, he asserted that there was "no merit in man".¹⁶⁵ Contrarily, Trent declared that the good works of the justified were also good merits of the man himself. Accordingly, accepting the fact of God's enabling of man through grace, man's own free efforts obligate God (self-appointed obligation) to pay man a gift.¹⁶⁶

While John Wesley accepted the place of man's ultimate free decision throughout the scope of salvation, he seems to have denied that man's effort in itself merited anything. On the contrary, as he stated in George Whitefield's 1770 funeral sermon, all merit was "(not in man, however high soever in grace, but merely) in the blood of Christ".¹⁶⁷

The Conference's 1770 propositions regarding good works, final salvation and "merit" were impatiently bald and provokingly unqualified. In his subsequent clarifications of the term "merit", he differentiated between two senses of "merit". One sense was the "proper" or "strict" sense. Though he does not explicitly define it, the "proper" meaning can only allude to the Roman Catholic understanding as outlined in the Council of Trent and noted above. This "proper" or "strict" sense he avowed he utterly renounced.¹⁶⁸ He stated in 1773 "that there is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can, strictly speaking, deserve the least thing at God's hand".¹⁶⁹ When he labeled a work "meritorious", he did not mean that a work merited or deserved a reward in the sense that something one was or had, or did in or of himself obligated God to return to him a favour.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, works were not meritorious in this strict sense even when accompanied by faith.¹⁷¹

However, he was willing to designate "works" as meritorious in an "improper" or "loose" sense. That is to say, they were meritorious only in the sense that they were "rewardable".¹⁷² "We are rewarded (at the Last Day) according to our works", or "because of our works", or "secundum merita operum", "as our works deserve," he said.¹⁷³ While he urged "that no man can be saved without his own endeavors", he did not mean for one to construe these endeavors earning in themselves a reward from God. What he meant was that man was not "entirely passive in the business of salvation".¹⁷⁴ He suggested the sense in which "works" "merited" salvation in his 1771 letter to Philothea Briggs. He said if one were to do works thinking to "merit" salvation thereby, one was "quite wrong". However, if one did them because they were the "appointed way" wherein we wait for free salvation, then one

was "quite right". They were rewardable in the sense that performing them led one along the way toward the dessert of final salvation.¹⁷⁵ We will further analyze his distinction in regards to other theological formulations in the next section.

ANALYSIS IN LIGHT OF OTHER THEOLOGICAL FORMULATIONS

How does John Wesley's espousal of a state of justification, the necessity of a faith producing good works, and good works as a condition which "merits" eschatological acceptance measure up to other representative, Protestant theological views, including Rudolf Bultmann's view?

Like John Wesley, Rudolf Bultmann asserted that faith for Paul indicated the act of becoming a believer as well as the state of being a believer.¹⁷⁶ Rather than being able to describe positively the nature of the state, he is much more forthcoming on the negative description of what the state is not. In contrast to the strict Calvinists, John Wesley and he concur that faith is not an act performed once for all whereby the believer is introduced into a state of grace in which he is continually preserved invincibly unto eternal life by God as a gift.¹⁷⁷ Further, they both describe the man of faith as having a new existence distinguishable from his former old existence.

Specifically, Rudolf Bultmann spoke of a "believing" existence and the new self-understanding of faith contradistinguished from "unbelieving" existence and the old self-understanding just as John Wesley spoke of the "old" and "new" creation.¹⁷⁸ Both eschewed an understanding of the act of faith in which the believer could think he was thereby introduced into a state of achievement in which he could rest and in which nothing further would be required of him. Notwithstanding, John Wesley maintained that something had been achieved in the moment of faith which the believer could say he possessed.

Rudolf Bultmann's description is more elusive. He has to acknowledge that at the moment of faith one can be described as "having" "believing

existence"; nevertheless, he does not accept that this faith is a "possession". Faith cannot be possessed but must be constantly won and realized anew in the decision of every new moment.

In this sense he differs from John Wesley and classical Protestantism. To begin with, John Wesley and classical Protestantism affirm that the first moment of faith introduces one into a state of existence which begins and which develops out of this point in time. Indeed, in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann, there is a sense in which the initial act of believing has the character of an "act done once for all" which begins and ends and is complete in itself. Moreover, the moment of initial, justifying faith is a unique moment of crisis, distinguishable from all other moments and a turning point upon a person's historical time-line. It is viewed as "punctiliar" time.

Though for Rudolf Bultman the initial act of faith is viewed as punctiliary and as a crisis, it is not seen (as it is for John Wesley) as more than a crisis or as essentially and qualitatively different from every subsequent act of faith.

Nonetheless, for John Wesley from this punctiliar moment of faith begins a state of "linear" time which is in progress, unfolding in a line. In this state, every moment does not necessarily need to be re-won. Herein, one may confidently rest in acceptance of God and need not be anxious or fearful of falling. According to John Wesley, it is a state wherein one exists for the time being but whose very continuance and development is conditioned upon continuing faith and good works.

Contrary to Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley maintains that one does "possess" faith and does live in a state of justification. Nevertheless, he does affirm as Rudolf Bultmann that in this state, one is, as Rudolf Bultmann put it, "constantly under the demand of God".¹⁷⁹ The believer is "every moment pleasing or displeasing to God".¹⁸⁰ Both passionately resisted self-satisfied and complacent religiosity. Accepting their differences, each stresses that the believer is continually answerable to God in every moment. In this fact, they compare favourably and are both set against the strict Calvinist position

which declared the believer was guarded once for all against "a real falling away" by the "gift of perseverance".¹⁸¹

According to Rudolf Bultmann, the concept of an unfolding, justified state turns faith into "a process in the past" and a "work".¹⁸² Faith is a "state" only in the sense that one is "constantly relating oneself to God's act of salvation"; that is, "the being constantly under the demand of God".¹⁸³ Rudolf Bultmann's denial of a justified state wherein one is under the demand of God yet at the same time secure in Him would be judged by John Wesley as discounting the very blessing of justification.

Furthermore, for Rudolf Bultmann, the justified "state" and the new existence characterized by "peace, joy, love," freedom from sin, and "the possession of the Spirit" does not correlate with any historical, verifiable, sensuous (outward or inward) situation. Namely, it corresponds to no human or religious experience or personal quality or virtue and leaves no visible tracks attributable to it.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, he recognized that from his concept of faith arose the polemic against all "religion of experience", against piety, sense of sin, and inspiration".¹⁸⁵ This polemic attacks the root of John Wesley's understanding of the justified state. For him, justifying faith was not only an inward, inspirational experience, but so were the "marks" and "fruit" that were integral to the justified and sanctified state.¹⁸⁶

Since the justified state according to Rudolf Bultmann is not a condition of unfolding theological progression toward the "idealistic" goal of perfection, power over sin is not as in John Wesley a gradual (or instantaneous) liberation "from sin and death considered as powers of nature".¹⁸⁷ "Sinlessness" is not a capacity "to do the good only" but a believer becoming what he already is by the constant appropriation of grace by faith.¹⁸⁸

Like John Wesley, Rudolf Bultmann held that the believer was a καὶνὴ κτίσις with eschatological existence characterized by love. Rudolf Bultmann acknowledged that Jesus gave the new commandment to "love" and that the believer is within "the law of Christ" which is "the demand that one love".¹⁸⁹

In love the faith which puts one into eschatological existence is at work.¹⁹⁰ All that matters for the man of faith is love.¹⁹¹ While for him, as for John Wesley, faith and love occur together, they do not appear to be separate qualities or entities as for John Wesley. Rudolf Bultmann asserts that love is nothing but the manifestation of faith in living.¹⁹² The decision of love is "precisely faith itself".¹⁹³

Moreover, though for John Wesley true faith and love are necessarily causally linked and automatically occur together in the inward person at the moment of faith, there is a sense in his theology which love outwardly considered as "good works" is viewed as logically and temporally distinct from faith even though true faith and love are connected. John Wesley could conceive of true faith existing temporally without concomitant "good works" (such as when someone died soon after the reception of justifying faith). Faith and love could not be temporally distinct for Rudolf Bultmann because faith and its manifestation in living (love) could not be separated, for in the structural nature of man his inward decision (will) and outward act must necessarily be one.

Furthermore, for John Wesley, the state of justification is positively related to and even dependent upon not just faith but also the performance of "good works" (love). For Rudolf Bultmann, as for John Wesley's Lutheran contemporary, Count Zinzendorf, the state of justification was solely dependent upon faith.¹⁹⁴

Nonetheless, one could say both Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley accept that love was the necessary accompaniment of justifying faith. However, their understandings of the nature of this consequent love are radically different. Indeed, they both argue love is to "love your neighbor as yourself".¹⁹⁵ However, for John Wesley, it also means to love Him who had first loved me. Plus, love is the foreign, supernatural quality which is the present God of love Himself who is given to the believer. In his coming He imparts to the believer an inward disposition of heart which is in turn directed back to God and

outward to man. Moreover, this quality of love comprehends all genuine virtue which produced every good temper.

Opposing this conception, Rudolf Bultmann renounces the idea of love as a quality. Faith brings with it no supernatural Person God and no qualitative change in man.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, absent in Rudolf Bultmann is the conception of the Person God uniting with the believer in a relationship of love. Similarly, faith ushers in no indwelling God of love who spiritually and morally transforms the inner person by purifying the heart and mind from carnality. In arguing this way, he shows he does not distinguish between justification and sanctification.¹⁹⁷

For Martin Luther, the man of faith laid hold of the "alien righteousness" of Christ which was not and never could be his own.¹⁹⁸ Any righteousness of the believer was extrinsic to man and not a quality at work within man.¹⁹⁹ The believer was not becoming intrinsically more and more righteous as Augustine, Catholics, Reformed, Pietist and Puritan Protestants argued.²⁰⁰ John Wesley would continue the dispute with Rudolf Bultmann he had with Count Zinzendorf who entertained this Lutheran position. In his 1745 tract "A Short View Of The Difference Between The Moravian Brethren", John Wesley quoted the Moravians as contending a believer was never sanctified in himself, having no inherent holiness in himself. The Moravian stated that a believer was neither more nor less holy to the day of his death.²⁰¹ This Lutheran understanding of which Rudolf Bultmann is a descendent disgusted him to his dying day.

According to John Wesley, the love resulting from justifying faith necessarily impinged upon the believer's inner and outward life. Furthermore, this love subsumed Scriptural virtue, morality, ethics and "keeping His commandments". For Rudolf Bultmann, nothing could be less true. Love was not an ethical or timeless principle which gave specific answers to the question, "What should I do?". Being dictated to by some external, outside authority and "formal" law was antithetical to authentic, believing existence.²⁰²

This was a characteristic of salvation by works and not eschatological existence.

Martin Luther could be heard also to say that for the one who stood in love, an "ethic" was no longer necessary. The person of faith who had been set free from the law knew what to do to love. In line with this Lutheran understanding, Rudolf Bultmann went on to affirm that faith did not result in consequences which are visible empirically or in experience. There are no empirical criteria of the presence or absence of love. One could not expect that the person with faith would be a "better" person or "better" neighbor.²⁰³ He prefers only to say faith makes a person no worse than his fellow. That is, faith does not effect a person morally one way or another. It is amoral.

Herein, he has gone beyond Martin Luther. Though Martin Luther affirmed that the believer did not progress in inherent righteousness, he did maintain that accompanying phenomena, such as "good works" did result from faith.²⁰⁴ Moreover, these works were consonant with the works of actual morality as enjoined by the law or, more specifically, the "commandments". He did say that the believer who was moved by the Holy Spirit was not dependent on the Decalogue and did not need written declarations. Rather, the Spirit taught him.²⁰⁵ However, in the same breath, he limited this statement by pointing out not every Christian had the spirit to such an extent. He then went on to say that abiding by the apostolic imperatives in the New Testament was incumbent upon the Christian.²⁰⁶

Rudolf Bultmann (and other neo-orthodox theologians) protested against the turn of the century "liberalism's" accommodation to current culture; nonetheless, he paradoxically seems to have left the man of faith's moral and ethical life either to one's a priori understanding or to the caprice and currents of the prevailing culture. The person of faith had neither more nor less insight into moral situations than the person under sin. Having said this, his contention against liberalism was not concerned with any moral and ethical accommodations but in philosophical and ontological concessions.

Like Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley severely criticized the established Christianity of his day. In his Earnest Appeal he lamented that on every side one saw "either men of no religion at all or men of lifeless, formal religion".²⁰⁷ In 1744 he rhetorically asked the University congregation at St. Mary's if "scriptural Christianity" was to be found in Oxford.²⁰⁸ Just the same, John Wesley would rather have left the planet than leave persons of faith to their a priori moral understanding or in a condition of moral laissez-faire. For example, in his sermon "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption", he attacks the "men of learning" (whose philosophy is not altogether dissimilar from Rudolf Bultmann's) who prove "to a demonstration that every man may do as he will, may dispose his own heart to evil or good as it seems best in his own eyes".²⁰⁹ His prescription for fundamental renewal encompassed a foundational change in relations between God and man. In addition, this necessarily must result in a radical qualitative and moral transformation in the person of faith. This personal transformation effected ever widening circles of society by effecting the community of faith which in turn impacted the society at large. His radical criticism of perfunctory "outward religion" having the "form of godliness" envisaged an equally radical reformation of this outwardness and "godliness".²¹⁰

John Wesley shared with seventeenth century Lutheran Pietism and Pietistic Puritanism this vigorous challenge of status quo, Christian, religious spirituality and praxis.²¹¹ He, like they, envisaged the justified person necessarily undergoing radical and thorough-going transformation of inner and outer godliness (holiness). Rudolf Bultmann's proposal of justification would probably be judged by them (in the words of seventeenth century John Smith) as mere "abstract justification".²¹²

Rudolf Bultmann would retort in kind that John Wesley's proposal of a faith necessarily eliciting visible, good works was a proposal of salvation by works and not faith. He contended that the whole letter to the Galatians was an aggressive attack against the misunderstanding that faith must be

supplemented by the performance of works.²¹³ Even more fundamental than this, John Wesley's whole theologizing on faith and good works must be inevitably indicted because it arose from the old, ontological framework and, therefore, could only be a proposal of works-righteousness. Therefore, the question of how good works relates to the state of justification and to salvation was impertinent and counter-productive to Rudolf Bultmann. Therefore, no further comparison between he and John Wesley regarding this issue is possible. However, we will relate John Wesley in this matter to other relevant theologies.

John Wesley's original zeal for and commitment to "holy living" was ignited and fueled by, among other main mentors, the master of the "holy living" school, Jeremy Taylor. Though he later diverged from this school in his understanding of original sin, grace, and justification by faith, he did not abandon his early conviction regarding "holy living"; rather, he accepted that justification by faith did not annul the ultimate need for good works but established the proper way to them.

Richard Baxter, to whom John Wesley was sometimes compared by his contemporaries and from whose Aphorismes he drew, stated, "The bare Act of Believing is not the only Condition of Salvation by the New Covenant; but several other Duties also are Parts of that Condition."²¹⁴

While John Wesley's formulation of the nature of justifying faith and justification by faith is simpler, clearer, more decisive, and more Protestant in tone than the somewhat ambiguous Aphorismes, he follows Richard Baxter in his stress on the necessity of "good works" for final salvation.²¹⁵

Further, John Wesley was not out of line with John Calvin and Reformed teaching in holding that justification could not exist without good works. In fact, he appears to have more kinship with them than with the Lutheran understanding. John Calvin stated, "We dream not of a faith which is devoid of good works, nor of a justification which can exist without them."²¹⁶ There was further agreement in that John Calvin argued "that faith and works are

necessarily connected".²¹⁷

However, John Calvin and John Wesley diverged on a crucial point but not until after further agreement. John Calvin pointed out that the faith which apprehended the righteousness of Christ at the same time necessarily brought with it sanctification. He said, "Christ, therefore, justifies no man without also sanctifying him."²¹⁸ These two blessings were inseparably and perpetually conjoined. With this and the understanding that justification and sanctification were logically distinct though contemporaneous in the moment of faith John Calvin and John Wesley agree. Differentiating between justification and sanctification set them apart from Martin Luther and Rudolf Bultmann.

However, though John Calvin affirmed that justification could not exist without works, he was content to let faith alone be the only condition of both the momentary occurrence and the continuation of both justification and sanctification. Not so with John Wesley. The continuation of justification and sanctification following on from the first momentary reception of faith was conditioned upon the continuation of this faith and the continuing production of good works, where there was time and opportunity.

The difference between John Calvin, the Reformed, the English Calvinists, and John Wesley particularly appears when one considers their two propositions counterpoised with their other views, such as imputed righteousness and the perseverance of the elect. John Calvin and the Reformed taught that conversion's continuation and completion in glorification is guaranteed and is to be entirely ascribed to the gratuitous supernatural gift of God irregardless of the factor of the believer's co-operation.²¹⁹ One of the Holy Spirit's tasks is to preserve continually the believer in a state of grace. In fact, it would be impossible for the truly faithful to revolt totally and finally from the holiness once begun.²²⁰ This meant that a bona fide believer whose faith had been evidenced by good works but who fell into sin and whose good works sputtered or ceased had not jeopardized his state of grace and its final

outcome. Even if one appealed to the Calvinistic premise that without good works there was no faith, since holiness and good works were not directly correlated to the continuing progress of the state of justification and sanctification, the degree to which they must be present or could be absent with co-existent faith was indeterminate. Indeed, the one accepted may "fall into grievous sins; and for a time continue therein" but not finally fall away.²²¹

On the other hand, John Wesley taught that while the believer had assurance of the state of grace in the present, the state was not immutable. It's continuation, progress, and completion in glorification was directly related to continuing faith and continuing good works. Thus, willing neglect of good works threatened sanctification, the growth in grace, the gift of justifying faith and hence, final salvation.

Connected with this, John Calvin rejected as an error the argument that anticipating a final reward was the motive for doing good works. Motive enough for him was we ought to "love him who first loved us".²²² Herein he breathed the spirit of Martin Luther.²²³ Contrarily, John ^{Wesley} and Richard Baxter passionately argued that if good works were not part of the condition for full salvation, then who "will use them to that End?"²²⁴ As strong as the appeal to God's love is and ought to be, John Wesley's concern was a real one.

Some critics might say that if his formulation gives more impetus to good works, it does so at the expense of faith. His system does require a balancing act since he tries to give both faith and works, justification and sanctification, equal emphasis without compromising the logical integrity of each. The case can be argued that to do so is to grapple more realistically with the full-orbed presentation of the New Testament.

The idea of a Protestant "double justification" which John Wesley seems to have adapted to his theological scheme harks back to Martin Bucer. Martin Bucer set forth a "primary justification" in which man's sins are forgiven and righteousness imputed to him. After this "primary justification", a "secondary justification" followed in which a person is made righteous. Though the

person's "primary justification" is conditioned on the basis of faith alone, the "secondary justification" occurs on the basis of good works.²²⁵ His motive in such a formulation appears to have been, as John Wesley's was after him, to forge a secure theological link between the gracious gift of justification and moral obligations placed upon the believer.²²⁶

In analyzing John Wesley's formulation of "double justification", we note that for him present justification is a "forensic" justification. Herein he differed from the Roman Catholic understanding expressed in the Council of Trent which rejected the notion of the imputation of Christ's righteousness.²²⁷ Furthermore, he differed from Martin Bucer in holding that the second justification is conditioned upon faith and good works rather than just good works. His understanding was differentiated from Bishop Bull's in that the Bishop taught that the first justification hinged upon a faith which included within it good works.²²⁸

John Wesley's teaching that the justified person's future, eschatological blessing directly corresponds to present good works is set apart in an essential way from the Roman Catholic conception. The Roman Catholics traditionally have understood "merit" to be an act performed by man which places God under obligation (self-appointed) to man.²²⁹ In other words, God promises to reward man for his efforts. In the final analysis, the traditional Roman Catholic view fundamentally affirms that man on his own, by his own free-will effort, may gain a reward from God.²³⁰ It avows that the possession of a reward is dependent upon man's own action alone such that if a certain action is performed man has a claim to a promise of God.²³¹ This is the "strict merit" (condign merit)²³² which John Wesley consistently asserted he disavowed.

In contrast to this, John Wesley not altogether unlike other Protestants did affirm a "loose" sense in which the believer worked for life and received a reward. John Calvin citing Matthew 26:27 stated that "working" was not opposed to grace.²³³ Referring to Genesis 22:16-18, as John Wesley himself

did, he observed that God promised and rewarded the works of believers with blessings.²³⁴ Later, Reformed theologians also agreed that good works were not without relation of order and connection with eternal life.²³⁵

Thus, John Wesley was not out of line with John Calvin and the Reformed in attributing to the term "merit" the meaning of "deserving". There was agreement between them all that "good works" were not the "cause" of salvation and that there was no merit in man.²³⁶ In holding that man in himself could produce no merit, they all differed from the Roman Catholics who ultimately assumed that the good works of the justified person, though God's gifts, were nevertheless in some sense his own good merits.

In arguing for a "loose" sense of merit, John Wesley was, nonetheless, appropriating a conception which harks back to Roman Catholicism. This "loose" merit was not that which put God under obligation of payment for a good work. Rather, the merit was based upon a "certain fitness". Namely, a good work being done, the recipient's (God in this case) returning the kindness would only seem natural.²³⁷

John Calvin and the Reformed and John Wesley concurred that "good works" were necessary to salvation and were the road of approach, the way to salvation. Notwithstanding, the essential distinction between them and him was that for them good works were only necessary as a condition of confirmation of justification. But for John Wesley they were also a condition of final justification. Upon the receipt of faith, the believer in the Calvinist and Reformed scheme is proleptically, eternally justified. Upon the receipt of faith for John Wesley, justification is a present fact without fear of the future, though its continuation and final outcome is conditioned upon faith and continuing good works and, therefore, may be indeterminate.

1. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, pp. 202f; vol. 4, p. 212.
2. The Catholic position saw God as the ancillary enabler of the human will who left to the will the responsibility of deciding for or against faith. The Reformed position viewed God as the dominating actor overpowering man's volition in such a way that man could will only to cooperate in believing.
3. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 246; vol. 4, p. 212.
4. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 246f; vol. 4, p. 321. "Undoubtedly faith is the work of God", said John Wesley; see, his Letters, vol. 7, p. 202; vol. 4, p. 212.
5. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 247; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 459; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 321.
6. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 321.
7. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 418; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 191.
8. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 247.
9. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 202.
10. Wesley, Treatise on Justification, p. 11; Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 362; vol. 7, p. 203.
11. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 247.
12. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 362.
13. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 220.
14. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 362. He accepted that in the moment Adam fell, man consequently had no freedom left. God gave the promise of a Saviour to man and his posterity and he graciously restored to him a liberty and power to accept proffered salvation. Therefore, fallen man's will which was completely enslaved to sin was re-invested automatically by Christ with the liberty and power to freely decide regarding salvation. The Arminian Magazine, vol. 2, p. 118.
15. Wesley, Journal, vol. 3, pp. 85f; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 381.
16. W, Journal, vol. 3, p. 85; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 381.
17. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 220.
18. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 362.
19. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 287; vol. 7, p. 202.
20. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 287.
21. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 321.

22. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 287.
23. Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 202f, 362.
24. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 287.
25. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 362.
26. Bultmann, Essays, p. 168.
27. Ibid., p. 169; see below, p. 307.
28. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 329; see below, p. 308.
29. Part and parcel with Rudolf Bultmann's existentialist interpretation is the presupposition that to exist is to decide. He said, "Faith is only faith in so far as it is decision, and decision is only decision when it is free." Bultmann, Essays, p. 177.
30. Bultmann, Essays, p. 177.
31. Ibid.; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 330.
32. Bultmann, Essays, p. 177.
33. Ibid., pp. 177f.
34. Ibid., p. 178. One who has made the decision in faith can only understand faith as God's gift; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 330. He exemplifies his understanding with the analogy of friendship and love. If one's love is returned and he in turn surrenders himself in a free act of decision, then one knows his own surrender is the gift of the other. One knows he actually exists from the other and has his being from his friend. He knows that he is "chosen". Bultmann, Essays, pp. 178f.

His analogy of the existential understanding of being chosen to friendship may be questioned. His analogy involves the interrelations of two people. Is that homologous to the relation of a person (called to decision) and a proclamation? What has a proclamation done for me? How can I feel I exist from "the other party" when I know factually the "other party" is an inanimate declaration incapable of personally interrelating with me? Does not this interpretation that man's existence comes as a "gift" from a declaration arouse a legitimate question as to why I should see my existence as dependent upon or coming from an impersonal, impotent, inanimate syntax of words? Why should I perceive a declaration which at one moment is able to give nothing as being able in another moment to give me life? How does a particular statement on its own move me to make a decision regarding it?

According to Rudolf Bultmann, in the spirit of Martin Buber's analysis of the I-Thou relationship, the ontological nature of that which confronts me does not determine personalness. How I relate to that which confronts me does. If I perceive the proclamation to be simply another object among objects then I de-personalize it, relating to it as an "I" to an "it". The very questions above presuppose an "I - It" relation. If I engage the proclamation with my whole being in mutual and direct relation, uniting with it and affecting it as it affects me, then I personally relate to it in an "I -

- Thou" relation. Martin Buber, I and Thou, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1947), pp. 3-23.
35. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 330.
 36. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 234; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 393, 396.
 37. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 382.
 38. Moreover, while Rudolf Bultmann maintained that the proclamation was the absolutely necessary prerequisite for the creation of faith, John Wesley denied that it was "the only mean whereby God gives faith". He maintained only that it generally came by hearing. God was bigger than a proclamation and not confined to it. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 234.
 39. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 179f.
 40. To decide for ourselves or against ourselves is the fundamental freedom of existence from which the outward conditions of life only take on the force of motives for our will. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
 41. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 124.
 42. *Ibid.*, pp. 124f.
 43. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 191. In 1756 he admitted to Richard Thompson that a person may be in a state of justification who did not have a "clear assurance" of it, Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 163ff.
 44. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 389; See his initial remark in the 1770 Conference that talking of a justified state "almost naturally" misleads men (which was later amended in 1771 to mislead men "very frequently"). Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 265. In 1782 he explained to Elizabeth Ritchie in referring to justification (as well as to "conviction" and "sanctification") that in "every state of mind" persons went backward or forward, Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 103.
 45. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 191.
 46. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 431f; See also Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 157f.
 47. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 204.
 48. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 431f; vol. 3, p. 204.
 49. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 431.
 50. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 236f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 146; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 124f.
 51. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 107. In another instance, he used the analogy of a "mustard seed"; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 204.

52. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 96. In 1778 he advised Ann Bolton that one could not insist enough in the classes on improving in Christian knowledge and love; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 297.
53. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 237.
54. John Wesley apparently could equate the terms "fruit" and "fruits". See Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 231; Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 5; and Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 331; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 250.
55. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 332; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 251.
56. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 251.
57. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 23; See also, Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 274.
58. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 332.
59. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 419.
60. Ibid., pp. 230f, 272f, 279, 282.
61. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 64.
62. Minutes, vol. 1, p. 5. For example, in his 1745 A Farther Appeal, he explained regarding the reception of the Holy Ghost, "And as we are figuratively said to see the light of faith, so by a like figure of speech we are said to feel this peace and joy and love." Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 171. Moreover, in 1759 he stated that the mark of faith was discerned by the "internal signs": the witness of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit, that is, love, peace, joy and meekness, Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 331; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 250.
63. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 304.
64. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 274; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 23; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 250.
65. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 250.
66. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 230f. Peace was given only to those who were justified by faith, Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 147; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 234, 422; Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 361; vol. 7, p. 391; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 171; Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, pp. 259f; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 250.
67. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 147; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, pp. 250f.
68. Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, pp. 390f. "Joy", along with righteousness and peace, was a divine means for preserving and increasing righteousness. He exhorted the justified believer to rejoice evermore till God sanctified us wholly. Contrary to William Law's ascetic teaching, "distress and coldness" were not "better" than

- fervent "love" and "joy" in the Holy Spirit, see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 361.
69. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 2, p. 250.
 70. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 122.
 71. Ibid., pp. 230, 237, 273. He was consistent in teaching that the believer was not one who was tormented by fear or distress in life or in death, Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 13; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 162.
 72. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 122.
 73. Wesley, Letters, vol. 1, pp. 259f.
 74. He cited particularly Romans 6:2,6 and 1 John 3:1-2,9 as evincing this fruit, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 418ff, 235f. While a fuller list of the "fruit of the Spirit" could sometimes be enumerated as fruit of justification, "meekness" or "lowliness" seem to stand out also as favorites for mention in addition to the above, Wesley, Works, vol. 1, p. 273; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 331; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 282, 273; Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 250; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 279, 230f.
 75. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 227.
 76. Ibid.
 77. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 356.
 78. So reads the 1771 edition. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 125; Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 29; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 227.
 79. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 131.
 80. One did not have "one grain of faith" who was not continually doing good. His statement to Thomas Church in 1745 epitomizes his sentiment, "I not only allow, but vehemently contend, that none shall ever enter into glory who is not holy on earth as well in heart as 'in all manner of conversation'." Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 38f, 187, 189.
 81. In 1760 he wrote to the editor of "Lloyd's Evening Post" that Methodists held the due discharge of moral and social duties of life "to be absolutely necessary to salvation". In 1773 he reiterated his long held position that no man could be saved by a faith which was without consequent good works. By good works, true, living faith was evidently known as apples were indicative of a living, apple tree. As a body without the soul is dead, so faith which is without works is dead. Without works "faith" so-called would not properly be faith. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 227; see vol. 4, pp. 29, 117f; see vol. 6, p. 28.
 82. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264.
 83. Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 29.

84. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, pp. 265, 337; vol. 4, p. 299.
85. Other terms for the inward quality were the "loving God and our neighbor"; "a loving heart", and "holiness of heart". Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 265; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 275; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 130; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 139; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 237.
86. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, pp. 265, 264; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 139; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 237.
87. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 106; Cf. 115.
88. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 227.
89. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 193f; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 273; Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 29; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 194.
90. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 38f; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 274; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 115.
91. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 194; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 273.
92. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 139; vol. 2, p. 42.
93. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 106, 120.
94. Ibid., p. 42.
95. Ibid., pp. 118, 167f; vol. 1, pp. 346f.
96. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 167f.
97. Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 5. In his 1745 letter to the Craftsman he stated that he did not allow a person "to have one grain of faith who is not continually doing good"; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 39. In his 1765 sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation" he declared that being zealous of good works was so necessary that if a person willingly neglect them he could not even retain the grace he had received; see, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 164. He reaffirmed this basic position in 1785 when he wrote Mary Cook that one could not keep justification unless he was zealous of good works; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 302.
98. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 110.
99. Ibid., p. 187.
100. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 162f.
101. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 360.
102. Ibid.

103. Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, pp. 7f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 160.
104. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 163.
105. Ibid.
106. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 310.
107. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 65.
108. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 164ff. The repentance consequent to justification was dissimilar from that antecedent to justification. It implied no guilt, no sense of condemnation or doubt of God's favour. It was the Holy Spirit's conviction of the "sin" ("the carnal mind" φρόνημα σαρκός) which still remained in the believer's heart. It was a conviction of the believer's continuing tendency which "remains but does not "reign" and their proneness to evil, to depart from the living God; see, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 164f. Since two contrary principles were present in a believer, nature and grace, the believer was engaged in "the war" against this remaining "carnal mind", this inbred sin; see, Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 397. He must fight the good fight of faith, to "watch and pray", against the evil tendency and keep it from springing up and tempting him to depart from God; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 47; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 332; vol. 3, p. 161.
109. Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 75.
110. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 167.
111. Ibid.
112. Ibid. Neither were repentance and these fruits necessary in the same sense. They were only "remotely necessary, necessary in order to the continuance of his faith, as well as the increase of it." Nevertheless, only faith was "immediately and directly necessary to sanctification". He professed "that faith is the only condition which is immediately and proximately necessary to sanctification", Ibid.
113. John Wesley said, "Remotely, therefore, the blessing depends on our works, although immediately on simple faith"; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 71. Therefore, negligence of good works inhibited being "perfected in love"; see, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 164. This was the same rationale advanced in the Moravian controversy of the late 1730's for the proper way to wait for justifying faith.
114. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 349.
115. Ibid., p. 348.
116. Ibid., p. 349.
117. Ibid.
118. Ibid.

119. Ibid., p. 348. He stated, "For by that faith in his life, death, and intercession for us, renewed from moment to moment, we are every whit clean, and there is not only now no condemnation for us, but no such desert of punishment"; see, Ibid., p. 349. By repentance one is still sensible he deserves punishment. By faith one is conscious that he has an advocate with the Father. By repentance one has an abiding conviction that there is no help in himself. By faith one receives not only His mercy but "grace to help in every time of need"; see, Ibid., pp. 349f. Repentance says, "Without him I can do nothing." Faith answers, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me". Through him I cannot only overcome ... I can "love the Lord my God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength." See, Ibid., p. 350.
120. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 326.
121. Was he, as he claimed later, then referring to the only justification which Paul had in his purview in Romans? In referring to this 1739 comment he stated second justification was out of his purview.

His account could be taken, as John Wesley later implied it did, not to preclude Paul teaching a final justification. Did he have in mind already in 1739 the distinction between a present and final justification? One would suppose that if John Wesley was conversant with the doctrine of double-justification in 1739, he would not have stated unequivocally "It ((justification)) is one and no more." Rather, he would have probably included the parenthetical clarification between present and final justification that he characteristically made after his known exposure to the teaching of a second justification.
122. Wesley, Journal, vol. 2, p. 470; see also, p. 473. Bishop Bull is likely the authority behind the positions of twofold justification advanced by those in 1739 whom John Wesley noted in his Journal, vol. 2, p. 326.
123. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264.
124. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 430f.
125. Wesley, Aphorisms, pp. 26, 31, 32, 34.
126. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 105; See also, p. 110; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 186f, 191f. Again in his Farther Appeal he observed that "universal holiness" was "previous to final justification" and he adduced quotes from the Book of Common Prayer to support this; See, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 111f. In his 1773 response to Richard Hill's compilation of his reputed doctrinal inconsistencies, John Wesley acknowledged "there is another justification (of which our Lord speaks) at the last day". See, Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 430. Defending himself, John Wesley argued he had not condemned the distinction of a twofold justification in his 1739 remark that the justification spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans and in the Articles was not twofold but one. His defense of his remarks is not terribly convincing. If it was as he said, he had failed to make his understanding clear. Whatever the comparison of his 1739 statements with his later statements showed, if the plain person to whom he wrote was befuddled, the fault would not entirely be the plain person's.

127. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 190.
128. Ibid.
129. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, p. 374.
130. Ibid.
131. Ibid., p. 375. He stated that the grace "superadded" to the performance of the works, not the works themselves, made perfect one's faith.
132. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 177.
133. Ibid.
134. Ibid., p. 178.
135. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 339.
136. Ibid., pp. 384, 422.
137. Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 26.
138. Ibid., pp. 36, 31f.
139. Ibid., pp. 31-36. The proposition that Christ will judge according to one's work of love was set forth on the basis of such Scriptures as Matthew 12:36 and 25; 1 Peter 1:17, 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12, 13; Hebrews 13:17; and Philipians 4:17; See, Ibid., pp. 32f.
140. Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 32.
141. Ibid., p. 34.
142. Ibid., p. 34. The apothegm not "for Life" but "from Life" became one of the foci of much debate in the wake of the Conference's 1770 Minutes. Wesley, Minutes, p. 96; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 263.
143. Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 34.
144. Ibid. Richard Baxter claims he wrote the Aphorismes as a result of the challenge of questionable teachings in the camp of doctrinal antinomianism. Cf. C. F. Allison, The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of The Gospel From Hooker to Baxter (London: S.P.C.K., 1966), p. 155.
145. Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 95.
146. Ibid., p. 96.
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid., The doctrinal antinomian, Dr. Tobias Crisp, had charged that believers "act from life, and not for life". Among others, John Flavell, John Howe, and Richard Baxter contested Tobias Crisp's

proposition. Fletcher, Works, vol. 2, p. 238; Toon, The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism, p. 50; Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 34.

149. Tyerman, The Life and Times of The Rev. John Wesley, vol. 3, pp. 93f.
150. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 263.
151. Ibid.
152. Ibid., p. 264.
153. Ibid. One example is his statement in his letter to Thomas Church; See, Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 187.
154. Wesley, Letters, vol. 3, pp. 373ff.
155. Fletcher, Works, vol. 2, p. 240.
156. Wesley, Minutes, p. 96; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264.
157. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264.
158. Ibid., p. 269.
159. Ibid., p. 264.
160. Ibid.
161. Genesis 22:16-17. Ibid.
162. Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 28; vol. 5, pp. 264f.
163. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 342f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 231. In a 1771 letter to John Fletcher he reflected that for between thirty and forty years he had clearly asserted "the total fall of man and his utter inability to do any good of himself". Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 231; see also a similar affirmation to Charles Wesley, Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 270. The complement to this fact was that all power to speak, think, or act was in and from the Spirit of Christ; see, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 342. Grace and the Spirit of God were absolutely necessary to raise even a good thought or desire in our hearts; see, Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 231.
164. John F. Clarkson et al., The Church Teaches, p. 246.
165. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 342.
166. McGrath, Iustitia Dei, vol. 1, p. 112; George D. Smith, ed. and arranger, The Teaching of the Catholic Church: A Summary of Catholic Doctrine, 2 vols. (London: Burn, Oates and Washbourne, 1948), vol. 1, pp. 576f.
167. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 342. In the 1771 "Checks", John Fletcher explained John Wesley's understanding by using the metaphor of gold in ore. He said that gold in ore had intrinsic worth. Likewise, it was Christ in us whose works were meritorious (only His works). Our works in a

sense were meritorious because they were His works when He worked in us by His Spirit, see, Fletcher, Works, vol. 2, p. 265.

168. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, pp. 393, 433.
169. Ibid., p. 433.
170. Ibid., pp. 433f.
171. Ibid., p. 434.
172. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 270; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 434.
173. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 264.
174. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 28.
175. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 280.
176. See below, pp. 317f.
177. Ibid.; Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, pp. 581, 584.
178. See below, pp. 317f.
179. Ibid., p. 318.
180. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 265.
181. Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 589.
182. See below, pp. 317f.
183. Ibid., p. 318.
184. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the believer's "eschatological existence" is no phenomenon of nature; see, Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 331. True, both he and John Wesley recognize that this existence is characterized by "peace" (well-being), "joy", "love", "freedom from sin", and the "possession of the Spirit". However, in opposition to John Wesley and classical Protestants, he rebuts this existence as the endowment of a new nature or as something realized in some psychological state or in the external conditions of life; These qualities, being real only in the decision of faith, signify that the believer understood his existence from God's standpoint rather than his own. Therefore, the fruits of faith are out of the realm of empirical and sensual psychological life. John Wesley would probably conclude that such a formulation was an actual denial of the fruits. Furthermore, such theology would represent to him what Rudolf Bultmann himself considered anathema: an arid theology which had little concrete relevance to man's personal existence.
185. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 50.
186. The "marks" of love, joy, and peace were inwardly felt or they had no being. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 332.

187. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 332.
188. Ibid.
189. Ibid., pp. 343f; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 181.
190. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 344, 330.
191. That is, all that matters is "keeping the commandments of God", "faith working through love", or "a new creation". Ibid, p. 344.
192. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 344.
193. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 181. Though he states that love is only possible to him who is freed from himself and has died with Christ, love is not any separate divine essence "poured" into him by God as it is for John Wesley; see, Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 330.
194. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 270.
195. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 344.
196. See below p. 320.
197. McGrath, Iustitia Dei, vol. 2, p. 13.
198. Ibid., p. 12.
199. Ibid., p. 14.
200. Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, pp. 565f; Stoeffler, Rise of Evangelical Pietism, pp. 17, 54.
201. Wesley, A Short View of the Difference Between the Moravian Brethren lately in England, and The Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley: Extracted Chiefly from a Late Journal, 2nd ed. (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1748), p. 15.
202. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings of Rudolf Bultmann, selected, trans., with an intro. by Schubert M. Ogden (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961), p. 222; see below, p. 317.
203. See below, p. 321.
204. Seeberg, The History of Doctrines, vol. 2, pp. 256ff.
205. Paul Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 270.
206. Ibid., pp. 270f; Seeberg, History of Doctrines, vol. 2, p. 259. He stated, "In the New Testament, all those things are shown which ought to be done and not to be done."; see, Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 271.
207. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, p. 45.
208. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 174.
209. Ibid., p. 253.

210. Cf. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 88f; vol. 1, pp. 174f, 178f. The 1744 Conference ascertained that God's design in raising up Methodist Preachers was "To reform the nation, more particularly the Church; to spread scriptural holiness over the land." See, Wesley, Minutes, vol. 1, p. 9.
211. Cf. Stoeffler, Rise of Evangelical Pietism, pp. 16f.
212. John Wesley, A Christian Library, vol. 11, p. 302. Lutheran Pietist Philip Jacob Spener's concern is relevant here. He quotes the seventeenth century aphorism that "whoever grows in learning and declines in morals is on the decrease rather than the increase." He went on to say this "is even more valid in spiritual life, for since theology is a practical discipline, everything must be directed to the practice of faith and life"; see, Philip Jacob Spener, Pia Desideria, trans., ed., and with an intro. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 105. Indeed, faith without the consequent manifestation of "good living" would be shown not to be "true" ("living") faith at all; see, Outler, ed., John Wesley, pp. 130f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 418f; Stoeffler, Rise of Evangelical Pietism, p. 17.
213. Rudolf Bultmann and Artur Weiser, Faith, p. 91.
214. Wesley, Aphorisms, pp. 26f. These "Parts" were identified as "Love, and sincere Obedience, and Works of Love". He set forth that there must be a concurrence of these to constitute the conditions having "the Promise of Life", see, Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 27.
215. Richard Baxter asserted that the conditions necessary for final salvation were "included in Faith", faith being taken in a comprehensive sense including both believing and sincere obedience. John Wesley was only willing to say the conditions were "implied in Faith". Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 30; Baxter, Aphorismes, Proposition Forty.
216. John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1957), vol. 2, p. 98.
217. Ibid. Reformed teaching echoed this. The seventeenth century theologian John Heidegger paraphrased the Helvetic Confession as saying that for all adults with time and opportunity good works were so necessary that those who despised or "wantonly neglected them, have no hope of salvation", see, Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 580.
218. Calvin, Institutes, vol. 2, p. 99.
219. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 261; Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 584.
220. Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 581.
221. George S. Hendry, The Westminster Confession For Today: A Contemporary Interpretation (London: SCM Press, 1960), The Library of History and Doctrine, ed. comm. S. L. Greenslade, et al., p. 167.
222. Calvin, Institutes, vol. 2, p. 99.

223. Roland H. Bainton, Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther (Nashville, New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), p. 230.
224. Wesley, Aphorisms, p. 34.
225. McGrath, Iustitia Dei, vol. 2, p. 34.
226. Ibid., p. 35. Further, Martin Bucer subsumed "good works" under the heading of justification as opposed to other Protestants who put them under regeneration or sanctification. He called "secondary justification" what John Calvin called "Sanctification".
227. McGrath, Iustitia Dei, vol. 2, pp. 76f.
228. Interestingly, the seventeenth century Reformed theologian, Francis Burmann, spoke of two justifications, a "first" and a "second". The "first" was the sinner's justification; the "second" was the justification of the "just" which took place not only by faith but also by works. Francis Burman stated that though the works were imperfect, "yet they get credit from God"; see, Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, pp. 562f.
229. McGrath, Iustitia Dei, vol. 1, p. 112; Cf. Küng, Justification, pp. 271ff. Hans Küng advises that the Council of Trent's teaching on merit had "nothing in common with pharisaic teaching on merit". It urged, as Hans Küng does, that though God chooses to "reward" the human works which are His gifts, no Christian should "glory" in himself but in the Lord.
230. Smith, Teaching of the Catholic Church, vol. 1, pp. 579f, 577.
231. Ibid., p. 577; Küng, Justification, pp. 271f.
232. Smith, Teaching of the Catholic Church, vol. 1, p. 579.
233. Calvin, Institutes, vol. 2, p. 120.
234. Ibid., pp. 121, 123.
235. Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 580.
236. Calvin, Institutes, vol. 2, p. 120; Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 578; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 342.
237. This idea is not absent in John Calvin who stated that the eternal reward is compensation for the sufferings of his children; see, Calvin, Institutes, vol. 2, p. 123.

SECTION TWO

RUDOLF BULTMANN'S UNDERSTANDING OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

CHAPTER ONE

PAULINE RIGHTEOUSNESS DESCRIBED

BACKGROUND TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

On Rudolf Bultmann's way to setting forth the exposition of "righteousness" by Paul (righteousness' preeminent exponent according to Rudolf Bultmann) he gives a precursory overview of its usage prior to Paul. In the Old Testament, the Jewish concern of placating society's claims by upright and blameless conduct was focused in the ethical term "righteousness".¹ It meant the respect one experienced in the sight of his fellows and in the sight of God, the King of justice.² After most of the explicit Old Testament precepts of righteousness which are negative in character have been laid down, one finds they are not exhaustive or systematic. The Law, which could not embrace every conceivable contingency in daily life, did not claim man in his entirety. Therefore, the obedience which resulted was "formal rather than radical".³ The prophets protested against scrupulous fulfillment of the law and preached that God demands radical obedience.⁴ Nevertheless, the Old Testament "righteousness" which sought to prove its worthiness before God through the fulfillment of the Law failed to be radical obedience in which the whole man knew he was claimed by God in his entirety.

While Rudolf Bultmann (as well as John Wesley) does not set forth a complete, systematic, exegetical basis for his interpretation of "righteousness" in the Old Testament, one wishes for more of a foundation than he gives.⁵

In respect to the meaning of "righteousness" in Jesus, Rudolf Bultmann asserts that he did not teach an ethic of "goods" or values nor did he speak of the essence of salvation as "the righteousness of God".⁶

Implicit in Jesus' protests against Judaism's false righteousness is an understanding of what Paul calls "righteousness". Jesus opposed the

contemporary, Jewish legalism and its pride in its correctness.⁷ He rebuffed contemporary conventional piety's idea of obedience as personal achievement and called into question its lack of earnestness.⁸ As the prophets before him, he substituted radical obedience for the legalistic conception of man's relation to God.⁹ However, Jesus connected this teaching with the "kingdom of God" whereas Paul expressed the teaching as "the righteousness of God".

In regards to the "primitive church's" use of "righteousness", Rudolf Bultmann is silent. One concludes that he does not find the term in use or important in this circle. Nonetheless, where it is employed in the Hellenistic churches, it is different from the Pauline sense. He refers to I Corinthians 6:11, "you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified...", as evidence that righteousness for the Hellenistic church is speaking not of justification by faith, but in the general Christian sense of the cancellation of sin.¹⁰ Namely, being made righteous is to be construed as being purified from one's sins which is the expected effect of baptism.¹¹

Before we delineate Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the Pauline conception of righteousness, let us note that the essential difference between Jesus and Paul regarding righteousness is not a conceptual distinction. The "righteousness of God" as "eschatological" is exactly the same for both as in Judaism.¹² As Rudolf Bultmann declares, "The concept which could be called the main theme of Paul's preaching is eschatological -- the concept of the 'righteousness of God', of 'justification' (δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ) and this concept corresponds to the 'kingdom of God'" (Jesus' term for the concept).¹³ More specifically, both Jesus and Paul have eschatological views. The difference is in the fact that while Jesus looks forward to the future coming of the Kingdom of God which is dawning now, Paul looks back to the fact that the turning point of the ages has already come in Jesus Christ. The distinction is in what Paul affirms about the actualization of righteousness. The righteousness, the justification, is already achieved and is now available through faith because of the saving work accomplished in Jesus Christ.¹⁴

RIGHTEOUSNESS

AN INTRODUCTION

In his preliminary remarks, Rudolf Bultmann relates Paul's teaching on righteousness to the analysis of man's existence prior to faith (as seen from the eye of faith) which he submits is an indirect pre-sketch of man's existence under faith. The man of pre-faith, who is under the power of death because he strives to live out of his own resources, loses himself. In contrast, the man under faith receives life by surrendering himself. This in short is what Paul means by "righteousness".¹⁵ Rudolf Bultmann posits that "righteousness" according to Paul is both the condition and essence of salvation. In proclaiming "righteousness" as the condition for receiving salvation, Paul is in harmony with Jewish tradition. Nevertheless, Paul differentiates himself from the Jewish tradition in the way he understands the possibility and actualization of righteousness. Therefore, as Abraham's righteousness (faith) was the presupposition to receiving the promise (Romans 4:13), likewise anyone who is now righteous by faith will receive life.¹⁶ Furthermore, because the "connection between righteousness and salvation is so tight and inevitable, righteousness itself can become the essence of salvation" (Romans 10:10).¹⁷ "Righteousness" and "salvation" are used synonymously as is evidenced by Romans 10:10 and also Romans 9:30f.¹⁸

What do the terms "righteousness" and, especially, the "righteousness of God" mean? Rudolf Bultmann determines that the biblical word, *δικαιοσύνη* is just as ambiguous as its Hebrew counterpart *צדק*.¹⁹ He facilely dismisses any other meanings of *δικαιοσύνη* by simply saying we must disregard them [particularly the idea of "distributive justice" dealt by a Judge (Romans 9:28)]. He wants to come quickly to what he estimates is the emphasis of both *δικαιοσύνη* ("righteousness") and *δικαίος* ("righteous"): they function in both an ethical (meaning "uprightness") and in a forensic sense.²⁰

RIGHTEOUSNESS: A FORENSIC TERM

When it signifies either the condition for or the essence of salvation, righteousness is a forensic term.²¹ When it behaves forensically, it is a legal, courtroom term which describes something one does not have on his own but which one has in the verdict of the "forum". While the same word in either English or German, "forum" is equated by Rudolf Bultmann with the "law court" in the sense of bringing something before the forum of public opinion.²² On the grounds that righteousness is what one has in the opinion of those to whom one is personally responsible ("verantwortlich"),²³ he emphatically disavows that righteousness denotes the ethical quality of a person. Rather, it implies a relationship.²⁴ For the justified one to imagine that he possesses righteousness as his very own and not as something coming from God, is to make the 'righteousness of God' his own. This is renewed self-deception and self-glorification.²⁵

Nevertheless, a man has or is "righteous" when he is "rightwised"; that is, pronounced "righteous". In a legal action, the "righteous" one is the one who wins the case and is acquitted.²⁶ As the "innocent" one, he is righteous not to the extent that he may be innocent, but to the extent that he is acknowledged innocent. As Rudolf Bultmann maintains, "'righteousness' then is the 'favorable standing' that a person has in the eyes of others; it is that 'right' which a man seeks to establish by process of law as 'his rights'."²⁷ Rudolf Bultmann cites a string of references in which he submits that the meaning "to reckon righteousness to..." evinces the forensic sense.²⁸ This parallels the forensic meaning of the Hebrew word "reckon", לָמַד, which the LXX translates as δικαιοσύνη.²⁹

Herein we confront the crux of the issue of righteousness which in the wake of the Reformation became not only the battle line for Protestants and Roman Catholics but also a later point of contention between Protestants. At stake are the questions of whether δικαίω means to "declare righteous" or to "make righteous", and whether δικαιοσύνη refers to a relationship, a quality

of life, or both.³⁰ At this juncture, let it suffice to say that for Rudolf Bultmann the "rightwised" ("justified" δικαιώω) is the one who is judged by the 'forum' to be in favorable standing. This acquittal is not a comment on the state of his innocence regarding a crime or ethical behavior. The "rightwised" one is not declared to be righteous in the sense that he is now, in quality, ethically righteous. Having said this, however, the "rightwised" is righteous in that he is in a favorable relationship with the 'forum'. We will rejoin this subject later where he discusses it further.

Rudolf Bultmann's designation of "righteousness" as a "forensic" term is concurrent with the mainstream of mainly Protestant thought, including, as we have shown, John Wesley. Karl Barth affirms that the righteousness of God has to do with a "declaring righteous" in which "the Judge pronounces His verdict according to the standard of His righteousness only."³¹ The Roman Catholic theologian, Hans Küng, contends that on the grounds of righteousness' usage in the Old Testament, the LXX, and the New Testament, δικαιοσύνη is forensic.³²

RIGHTEOUSNESS: AN ESCHATOLOGICAL TERM

After establishing that "righteousness" is a forensic term, Rudolf Bultmann contends that "righteousness" becomes an "eschatological" term. The more Jewish piety expected God's rightwising verdict to come from his eschatological judgement, the more "the forensic term 'righteousness' became an eschatological term". According to Rudolf Bultmann, as an exposition of Matthew 5:6 indicates, the Jews were hungering and thirsting not for ethical perfection, but for God to pronounce His verdict over them as "righteous". They tried to fulfill the conditions (keeping the commandments of the Law) which they believed were the presuppositions for God's verdict. While there is a contrast between the Pauline and Jewish conception of righteousness, they both completely agree that "the formal meaning of δικαιοσύνη, ... is a forensic-eschatological term".³³

Rudolf Bultmann maintains that the eschatological significance of "righteousness" is as "clear as day" in the passages (i.e. Galatians 5:5, Romans 2:13 "the doers of the law who will be justified") which tell of a future verdict of righteousness to come in the eschatological judgement.³⁴

However, a characteristic of Pauline "righteousness" which contrasts with the Jewish expectation of a future verdict is that righteousness is "already imputed to a man (of faith) in the present". This is typically demonstrated in Romans 5:1,9 in which it is said "we are now rightwised...."³⁵

Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann concludes that the righteousness of God is now present and "is revealed" in the preaching of the gospel. He goes on to argue that this does not mean that the preached Gospel expounds some teaching about righteousness, but that through the Gospel righteousness becomes a possibility (a reality in faith) for the hearer of it.³⁶ The term "be revealed", as well as "be manifested", when used eschatologically, means to "appear on the scene" or, in existential terminology, "become possibility" or operative. When I Corinthians 1:7 speaks of the "revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ", it does not designate a communication that he will impart, but his appearing in person at the parousia.³⁷ The "appearing on the scene" or "becoming effective" is an event occurring to or for men which "enables man to understand or perceive the event".

Rudolf Bultmann shows his existentialist concern for avoiding a conception of a "subject" viewing an "object" in time and space. He readily points out that the "appearing" is not the perceiving of the event, but the event itself that is denoted by "being revealed". The "revealing" of God's wrath (Romans 1:18) occurs even when those concerned are not even aware of it themselves.

From the existentialist point of view, righteousness is "revealed" in the sense that the preaching of the gospel opens up to the hearer the possibility of interpreting and understanding things in a new way.³⁸ As Rudolf Bultmann suggests, disclosure will take place not through proclamation but in the event itself.³⁹ In other words, the proclamation does not impart some new

knowledge that can be grasped, but the hearer in interaction with the preaching is offered the possibility of bringing to it a fresh interpretation.

Although Paul affirms that righteousness is a present reality, Rudolf Bultmann assures us that for Paul this does not negate its forensic-eschatological meaning. Paradoxically, the eschatological event is already present in that God already pronounces His eschatological verdict in the present over the man of faith.⁴⁰

In order to grasp the meaning and basis for Rudolf Bultmann's determination of the Pauline term "righteousness" as "eschatological", one must set righteousness into the context of his interpretation of the whole scenario of biblical history and its relationship to "eschatology". While this involves a nexus of difficulties whose serious treatment lies much beyond the scope of this dissertation and since Rudolf Bultmann's treatment of history and eschatology is the context within which righteousness and justification by faith (as well as "sin" and "the Law") is comprehended, we will very briefly present the outline of his thought being content in making only major observations and pointing in the direction of significant concerns.

By the time biblical history and eschatological interpretation reaches its exemplary and radical form in Paul and John, Rudolf Bultmann assumes it had become a hybrid. Eschatological description had originated in a constantly developing, ancient, near-eastern myth which filtered through the Old Testament, "later Judaism", Jesus, and the "early Christian community" on its way to Paul and John who added to it their own twist.

Defining eschatology as "the doctrine of the 'last things', or, more accurately, of the occurrences with which our known world comes to its end ...", Rudolf Bultmann believes he traces the origin of the Old and New Testaments' apocalyptic presentation to a common, ancient myth about the end of the world.⁴¹ According to Rudolf Bultmann, this basic cyclical idea of the annual periodicity of nature went through constant development. Greek and Stoic Philosophy developed the idea of the world ending and the

Babylonian tradition "historicised" it by viewing humanity as passing through eras.⁴² The evolution of the myth received a significant modification when the idea of the eternal, cyclical movement of world-years was abandoned and the idea of the periodicity of the course of time was retained. The end of the old world-era is followed by a "new beginning" of a time of unending welfare. Here, according to Rudolf Bultmann, we meet eschatology in its real sense.⁴³

In the only Old Testament prophecy to do so, Daniel describes two epochs or times, the present and coming Aeon, which are opposed to one another. As the myth develops, the Old Testament rejects the idea of cyclical movement of world-ages but does utilize the imagery of this mythology.⁴⁴ Finally, later Judaism, like Daniel, develops the idea of two Aeons rather than the cyclical periods and eschatology becomes truly established.⁴⁵

Though Rudolf Bultmann can be seen to give the impression that Jesus picked up his eschatological preaching from the later Jewish apocalyptic writers, he does not necessarily commit Jesus to receiving his eschatological teaching from this later apocalyptic Judaism, for he leaves the issue in limbo.⁴⁶ In tracing the development of the conception of eschatology which came to Paul, Rudolf Bultmann avouches that the "early Christian community" carried on the eschatological preaching of Jesus and enriched it by incorporating themes from the Jewish apocalypics.⁴⁷

In his exposition of early Christian history and eschatology, Rudolf Bultmann maintains that the "early Christian community understands itself not as a historical but as an eschatological phenomenon" -- they wait for God's Reign to shortly appear.⁴⁸ He reasons that the "problem of eschatology" grew out of the fact that their expected end of the world failed to materialize.

While he differed from his mentor Johannes Weiss in arguing that Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah, he followed Johannes Weiss's thesis that Jesus proclaimed the imminence of a transcendental kingdom of God which failed to come.⁴⁹ Rudolf Bultmann claimed, the 'Son of Man' did not come in the clouds of heaven. Consequently, the early Christian church faced the

paradox of those who viewed themselves as an eschatological community but at the same time had to recognize themselves as having become a historical phenomenon.⁵⁰ Some of the premises and presuppositions behind Rudolf Bultmann's analysis should be very briefly examined because of the cruciality of this problem in calling forth the resultant, Pauline, eschatological exposition.

Rudolf Bultmann's contention that the earliest Christian community did not understand itself as a "real phenomenon of history" is one of the premises which supports the thesis that an eschatological problem arose for early Christianity. This contention implies his assumption that the Christian community (Paul) did not identify the historical people of Israel as the 'chosen race'.⁵¹

If Rudolf Bultmann can establish his premise, he is then free to draw his conclusion that the Christian community is God's people of the end-time which has no "real history".⁵² Here, Rudolf Bultmann's concept of the "world" and "history" comes to the fore. He assumes a concept of history similar to the one he finds operating in the apocalypics of "later Judaism".⁵³ He interprets early Christianity as not viewing itself as a "real phenomenon of history" because "world-time" for it is finished, and the end is imminent.⁵⁴ According to late Jewish apocalypticism, the end is "really the end of the world and its history. This end of history no longer belongs to history as such".⁵⁵ Moreover, this end of history is not the arrival of historical progression to its goal but is a "breaking-off", the death of the "world", the "old age".⁵⁶ Since the Christian community views itself as part of the new Aeon, it sees itself as taken out of the existing world.

Rudolf Bultmann seems to be interchanging at will and without warning two conflicting concepts of "world" and "history". He avows in History and Eschatology that the Christian community had "no real history".⁵⁷ It did not understand itself as a "real phenomenon of history". In the context, he identifies "real history" as an event of history (i.e., the exodus) such as that

upon which the Old Covenant was founded. Moreover, "real history" incorporates an understanding of "world-time" and "world-history" where chronology and events are dated.⁵⁸ It is the sphere of "orders", of the tasks of society and state.⁵⁹

He maintains the early Christian community regarded itself eschatologically. His portrayal of the New Testament's eschatological picture of the world presupposes an existential interpretation. As he enunciates, "world" is not really a "space" concept. It speaks of the manner of man's existence, of a "how", not the "what", of man's existence in which he stands as an object. "World" is the manner in which man relates to what is at his disposal. In its eschatological, existential sense it is the sphere which is estranged from God and theologically judged.⁶⁰

Therefore, if the early Christian community were not interested in "real history" but viewed themselves as an eschatological phenomenon, then they would not be interested in that which "real history" involved i.e., signs, frightening events, disordered nature, and final catastrophe. But Rudolf Bultmann declares that the apocalypics and the early Christian community were interested in these signs.⁶¹ They expected "real history" to end by supranatural, cosmic catastrophe.⁶² If this is also its view of the world and history, how can it be said that it views "world-time" as finished, and the "old age" as past, when clearly the world they anticipated ending had not yet ended? If, as Rudolf Bultmann avows, they had no interest in "real history" but regarded themselves as an eschatological phenomenon, why then did they look for an end to this "real history" and world with its chronology and orders?

Therefore, if the early Christian community were a community which did not perceive itself from a real, historical perspective but viewed the "world" as a manner of existence which had "ended", how can Rudolf Bultmann still allege that the early community anticipated an imminent end of the natural, chronological world and became disillusioned when the end did not take

place?⁶³ On the other hand, if they were looking for the destruction of nature and the cessation of human life and orders in a final catastrophe (which presumes an interest in real history), how can they conclude that it has already taken place when they know it has not?

Rudolf Bultmann further asserts that when the end of "real history" failed to arrive, then the eschatological community recognized it was a historical phenomenon. Is this not inconsistent? If the community had regarded itself and the world eschatologically, then it would not have determined that the end of the natural world had failed to arrive. Only the "world" eschatologically and existentially conceived would have been viewed as having ended. In this case, why would the new people of God have suddenly begun recognizing themselves historically? His proposition that the community now recognized its historical reality adds great force to the argument that the New Testament -- from the earliest community onwards -- is always concerned with its historical reality and links itself in historical continuity with ancient Israel.

Rudolf Bultmann's allowance of an early Christian community which capriciously reasons simultaneously in a hop-sotch manner between two contrasting views of the world and history seems a more contrived, arbitrary, and ambiguous portrayal than reason and the New Testament allow.

Nevertheless, Rudolf Bultmann reasons that the early Christian community sets the stage with the problem of eschatology: the end fails to occur and the eschatological community is now forced to recognize itself as a historical phenomenon. Therefore, it is left to Paul and John to begin to solve the problem. Paul shares the basic assumptions of the apocalypics and the early, eschatological community regarding the world and history. The implication of Rudolf Bultmann's arguments is that Paul's eschatological view of history is indebted to "later Judaism" rather than to Jesus or the Old Testament.⁶⁴ That Paul's eschatology was derived from "later Judaism" is a questionable thesis.⁶⁵

According to Rudolf Bultmann, Paul's unique contribution is to alter decisively the "apocalyptic view of history" by interpreting it on the basis of his anthropology, his view of man.⁶⁶ This basically means that Paul interprets history from an existential, conceptual framework. He does not view the history of Israel as a history of a nation which experiences a cycle of sin and forgiveness. He perceives the history of Israel as a whole unity, a unity of sin in which not only Jews but all of mankind is implicated. Paul does not understand it in terms of objective actions and events in time and space like a 'what' from which a meaning and a purpose may be extracted. On the contrary, he apprehends it as a manner of existence understood in terms of the individual's personal existence. The history of Israel is the sinful existence in which each individual is bound and which is the presupposition for the reception of grace. Rudolf Bultmann cites as evidence Paul's presentation of history in the form of the autobiographical "I" in Romans 7:7-25a.⁶⁷

For Paul, the decisive eschatological event has already taken place in the present in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which for the believer has ended the old age and begun the new one. The parousia of Christ is one event interpreted in two ways: it has happened (and happens when the Gospel is preached) but will unfold in a cosmic drama with the imminent parousia of Christ.⁶⁸ However, the cosmic drama is only the completion and confirmation of the eschatological occurrence already begun. Rudolf Bultmann claims, "Paul has historized the Jewish apocalyptic speculation of an intermediate messianic reign preceding the new Aeon by conceiving the time of the Messiah's reign as the time between Christ's resurrection and parousia -- i.e. as the Now in which the proclamation is sounding forth (I Corinthians 15:23-28)".⁶⁹

In other words, Paul "historizes" the Messianic reign which the Jewish apocalypics taught as occurring in the cosmic-natural realm of the temporal and spacial. That is, he applies it to the dimension of genuine occurrence in

man's actual life.⁷⁰ In short, he interprets it existentially. Rather than understanding the Pauline references to the "parousia" as two, literal, once-and-for-all historical events in time and space in the manner of classical Christianity, Rudolf Bultmann de-mythologizes this view by regarding the "parousia" in Paul's eyes to be, firstly, existentially present and, secondly, a future cosmic-natural event (which is insignificant in Paul).⁷¹ Understood existentially, the "parousia" is an occurrence which happens to a man in his individual existence when the salvation-occurrence is proclaimed in the word of preaching.⁷² The Messiah's intermediate reign is Now, which is also called the "time-between", the "interim"⁷³ and is the dialectical existence between the "no-longer" and the "not-yet".

While for John the present time is also the "time-between", he radicalizes more fully the conception of the eschatological event or happening in the present giving up the expectation of future cosmic events (which Paul still retains).⁷⁴

Rudolf Bultmann insists that this "time-between" for Paul has both "essential" and chronological meaning. According to him, the crucial question is whether or not this meaning of the "time-between", this dialectical understanding of the relation of history and eschatology could be retained in Christian understanding. "No, it could not," he answers. Therefore, in the post-pauline literature of the 'developing church', the "time-between" took on a "merely chronological meaning".⁷⁵

Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation raises some concerns. If the Pauline understanding of history and eschatology presented the solution to the delay of the parousia of Christ, is it reasonable to think that the existential exposition of Paul, who, in Rudolf Bultmann's words was "the founder of Christian theology", exerted such little influence over those who immediately received his Christian mantle and followed him that they failed to adopt his solution? Why did the "developing Church" (whose views are represented in the New Testament) think in predominately "chronological" terms when their

model antecedents and teachers (apocalyptic, Jews, early Church, Paul, and John) thought eschatologically? Why did the post-Pauline, developing Church feel disappointment over the failure of the parousia of Christ to materialize as Rudolf Bultmann contends? If the early Christian community was gripped by disappointment when their expectation of the Son of Man's appearing in the clouds failed to occur, why were they disillusioned that he "failed" to come when they never had a definite fixed day (Rudolf Bultmann's assumption) for his coming?⁷⁶

From this brief examination, we gain a better appreciation of the background of Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of righteousness as "eschatological". As "eschatology" is essentially interpreted "existentially" by Paul, therefore, so is righteousness. In the past, Paul says, the Jews sought by obedience to the law and by good works to earn God's adjudication of righteousness in the eschatological judgement. Paul declares that what was then seen as future is now declared as present. God pronounces His eschatological verdict in the present over the individual, existential existence of the man of faith. Therewith, one may observe that when Rudolf Bultmann is speaking of the eschatological significance of "righteousness", he is not referring to a "chronological judgement" espoused by classical orthodoxy in which world-history will end at the last moment of time and even the already justified will give an account to God. However, in so far as he identifies a future sense in righteousness, Rudolf Bultmann is in accord with the classical, orthodox view. Nevertheless, what distinguishes him from others is his existential interpretation of this eschatological dimension of righteousness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AS "ALIEN"

In further characterizing "righteousness", Rudolf Bultmann consciously aligns himself with the Reformers' position in affirming that righteousness is "imputed" as aliena justitia. It is not one's own possession but is reckoned to him.⁷⁷ He is in harmony with Martin Luther who championed ^{the view} that God does

not want to save us by our own righteousness, but by the extraneous righteousness which originates from outside ourselves. Martin Luther taught that this righteousness is utterly external and foreign to us and comes to us from beyond ourselves, from heaven.⁷⁸ However, though for a different reason than John Wesley, Rudolf Bultmann does not assert either the Lutheran or Reformed (Barthian) conception that our righteousness consists in Christ's righteousness being reckoned to the believing sinner as "his" righteousness.

Rudolf Bultmann accepts that δικαιού is a "declaring righteous" but rejects the idea of a fiction.⁷⁹ "Righteousness" refers to a man's relationship to God.⁸⁰ Man is really righteous -- "i.e. absolved from his sin by God's verdict".⁸¹ It is in this sense in which man is understood to be truly righteous that Rudolf Bultmann can make his assertion that righteousness is the condition for salvation. For if man is righteous, then salvation, it would seem, is conditioned by no further necessity (such as ethical renewal).

When Rudolf Bultmann argues that interpreters go wrong by misunderstanding "righteousness" as an ethical quality rather than as a relationship to God, he seems to agree with Martin Luther's distinction between "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" righteousness. Martin Luther urged that Christians are always "extrinsically" righteous in a way which comprehends how they are before God and according to His reckoning. Contrarily, the Christian is never "intrinsically" righteous in the sense that he possesses the quality of righteousness as if he is righteous in and from himself or by virtue of his works.⁸²

Rudolf Bultmann, as John Wesley, adamantly advocates the view that when God rightwises a sinner, the sinner is righteous. One is not to suppose that the sinner is to be "regarded as if" he were righteous. Rather, the "rightwised" are persons transplanted into eschatological existence who have no further contact with sin.⁸³

In determining that "righteousness" which is not my own is accorded to me in justification as aliena justitia, Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley

counter the historic, Catholic contention that God concomitantly declares one just as well as makes him just. In this Catholic view, righteousness in justification is imparted to the sinner in such a way that the sinner is not only declared just but is made just intrinsically in his heart and holy in himself.⁸⁴ While they and the Catholic consent to the extent of agreeing that when God declares a man just he is righteous, he (and John Wesley as far as it touches justification) quite dissents from conceiving this righteousness as an inner quality of ethical righteousness which becomes a part of man's nature.

He agrees with Martin Luther's understanding of justification in which no distinction is made between it and sanctification.⁸⁵ Further, the declaration of righteousness in justification is God's only requirement for salvation in contrast to John Wesley's affirmation that both a declaration of righteousness for present salvation and a "making righteous" for final salvation are necessary.⁸⁶

In support of his argument that man is righteous, Rudolf Bultmann reasons that in Romans 5:19 Adamitic men were not regarded "as if" they were sinners, but as really sinners. Likewise, then, to balance the parallel, members of Christ are really righteous.⁸⁷

He avows that this old debate over whether or not one is really righteous or is only regarded "as if" he is righteous lies on a misunderstanding. Interpreters go awry when they imagine that "righteousness" denotes the ethical quality of a man rather than his relation to God. This supposition is elicited in the question which asks how Paul can place the truly righteous, "sinless" man under the ethical imperative. Rudolf Bultmann says his view disposes of this chronic problem.

However, he warns, if one takes Paul's words as they stand and leaves off the "as if" but fails to recognize righteousness' forensic-eschatological meaning, two wrong tracks result. Firstly, the "idealistic" error (of which he accuses F. C. Bauer) arises which sees "rightwising" as the taking into the

consciousness the principle of obedience to the idea of the good. Man is righteous since his will affirms the ethical law in its totality. Righteousness then means the "ideal" character of a man who is "striving toward not sinning", whose living tends toward the good. By endless progress toward the ideal of ethical uprightness, he can be deemed sub specie of the idea as righteous.⁸⁸

Secondly, considering "righteousness" along the pattern of the Gnostics who deem it to be a divine "power" which flows into the initiate in the mystery of rebirth and drives out the demonic forces which reigned in him is a mistake.⁸⁹ Rudolf Bultmann is unconvinced by this view with which R. Reitzenstein is associated.

Rudolf Bultmann adds that the forensic-eschatological sense of righteousness is corroborated by and in parallel with the term "adoption to sonship" (*υιοθεσία*). As the salvation-occurrence happened "for our justification", it is also described as occurring for the purpose "that we might receive adoption as sons" (Galatians 4:5). Also, "adoption" has the same double nature as "righteousness". It is both a thing of the future, a longed-for goal, and a thing of the present which is attested by the fact that in the Spirit we cry "Abba".⁹⁰

RIGHTEOUSNESS AS "GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS"

In turning to a consideration of "righteousness" as "God's righteousness", Rudolf Bultmann focuses on Paul's polemic with Judaism. As has already been observed, the immediate contrast between Paul and Judaism concerning righteousness is that what was a matter of hope for the Jew is for Paul a present reality (as well as hope).

A further antithesis between Paul and Judaism concerns the issue of the condition for God's acquitting decision. For the Jew, the condition is "keeping the Law"; for Paul, it is "sola Fide" -- "by faith alone". Paul enunciates his thesis that man is justified by faith when he speaks of Abraham in Romans

chapter four and of Christ (the end of the law) in Romans 10:4. Rudolf Bultmann states that Paul's proposition which is hammered out in debate with the Jew is shown in two ways. Firstly, Paul directs attention to the negative aspect of his proposal: the condition of righteousness is "without works of the Law". Secondly, in juxtaposition to the negative aspect Paul places the thesis's positive aspect: righteousness is "by, or from faith".⁹¹ In establishing the condition of justification, he as John Wesley proceeds in a traditional Protestant manner of emphasizing that it is not by works or, even as the strict Calvinists maintain, by Christ's active righteousness, but by faith.

Rudolf Bultmann further states the Pauline perspective of righteousness is accorded to man by the pronouncement of the judge (God) and so means recognition in God's sight. Therefore, Paul sees the fundamental motivation of the Jews' striving as a "need for recognition" not just from men, but from the final court of appeal, God. Neither in the Old Testament nor in Judaism did the Jew conceive of righteousness in the Platonic sense of a quality which man has himself. It is not a structure of the inner being like "cleverness", or artistic sense which is a property of the individual on his own account. One's righteousness is only that in relation to others. The judge's pronouncement establishes the righteousness of the accused so that the accused is given the "right" of it. He is thereby recognized in the structure of the community.⁹² Rudolf Bultmann states, "The righteousness for which man strives, or rather, which God ascribes to him, is recognition of him, and the honouring of him."⁹³

This striving for recognition is common to all men regardless of whether it be manifested as a desire to set a record or as a child's stupidity in desiring to achieve distinction.⁹⁴ This human quest is exemplified in its culturally distinct Jewish form as the struggle to gain God's recognition through the Law. The tense Jewish zeal, the consistency and readiness to sacrifice, the performance, the "works" are all an attempt to establish one's own righteousness by the Law so that God is put under necessity to recognize the

Jew. This endeavor to achieve by performance is what Paul calls striving "to establish their own (righteousness)" (Romans 10:13).⁹⁵

In compliance with this, Paul contests the Law, not on account of its contents which are God's unbreakable demands, but because the Jews use it to store up merit in God's sight and to boast in it. Contrarily, the Christian message of "justification by faith alone" rejects all self-glorying based on individual achievements. God grants justification to man so that it is His gift alone which establishes man's acceptability.⁹⁶

Rudolf Bultmann's identification of the motivation of the Jewish striving as a "need for recognition" seems to stop short of viewing the "need for recognition" as the fundamental need for the pardoning "acceptance" and acquittal of God Himself as in traditional Protestant theologies; for example, John Wesley's. There is some ambiguity at this point because as Rudolf Bultmann stated elsewhere, to be "rightwised" is to be in a favourable relationship with the 'forum'. While he states what favourable standing is not (not innocence regarding a crime or ethical behaviour), he does not amplify what favourable standing is. He uses the analogy of the law court which typically pictures a defendant before the law court which will render a judgment regarding his status: guilty or innocent. A judgment implies a verdict which seems to go beyond a mere acknowledgement of the "fact of" or "status of". However, he seems to want to use "recognition" and "favourable standing" as terms which are not indicative of a defendant's acquittal from guilt. His other analogies of the drive for setting records or a child's stupidity reinforce the opinion that it is simply "recognition" - the sense of "Here I am, acknowledge me, I'm important" or "I belong" - for which he believes the Jew strives. Since the term *δικαιοσύνη* is associated with a judge and a law court, it would seem that striving for righteousness is striving not just for recognition, but for the recognition which would pronounce or gain one the endorsement of being "in the right" or acceptable in the sense of being cleared from a charge by the authority determining acceptability.

Further, the tense striving of the Jews to fulfill the Law may in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann's explanation be well explained as their pursuit for that which would counteract or compensate for a subconscious or realized moral lack and guilt before the Almighty and Holy Yahweh. Rudolf Bultmann *probably* describes the Jewish motivation simply as "recognition" to avoid entangling "righteousness" with religious guilt and morality. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the fundamental attitude of the Jew which is the essence of sin is "boasting". The radical giving up of "boasting" is faith's attitude. According to Paul, "faith is the absolute contrary of 'boasting'".⁹⁷ Faith excludes "boasting" because righteousness cannot be won by human effort. Righteousness is "sheer gift".

In so far as Rudolf Bultmann posits the view that the negative and positive aspects of Paul's thesis on the condition of righteousness arises out of his controversy with the Jews, he seems to follow Wilhem Bousset, Wilhem Wrede and Albert Schweitzer's thesis. They regarded Paul's proposal of justification as "convenient polemic" which he created for the purpose of dealing with the controversial Judaizers. Similar to them, Rudolf Bultmann asserts that only when Paul is stemming the tide of the Jewish call for keeping the Law does he speak of righteousness by faith.⁹⁸ However, Rudolf Bultmann expands the category of opponents beyond the Judaizers to include Judaism as well.

Furthermore, according to Rudolf Bultmann, Paul's antithesis seems to be more than the situational and convenient expedient it was for Wilhelm Bousset, Wilhelm Wrede and Albert Schweitzer. Rudolf Bultmann does not relegate righteousness by faith to a peripheral role in Paul as they do. Rather, he holds it to be the presupposition for receiving life as well as life itself.⁹⁹ Moreover, the doctrine of justification makes explicit what kind of new understanding of human existence is given in the saving event.

In further contrast to "works", the "gift-character" of righteousness is exemplified in the fact that "grace" is also equated with "faith" as the basis of

"rightwising" (Rudolf Bultmann compares Romans 3:22 "righteousness through faith", with Romans 3:24 "justification by grace as a gift"). He states that "grace" like faith "can be placed in direct antithesis to 'works of the Law'".¹⁰⁰ The paradox in "grace" is that it specifically applies to the transgressor, the sinner. God is spoken of in Romans 4:5 as the one "who justifies the ungodly". The term ἔλεος, mercy, is basically synonymous with grace in Romans 11:32. ἔλεος takes on a more eschatological emphasis and is used by Paul in reflection on the history of salvation in Romans 9-11.¹⁰¹

In an effort to consolidate his argument, Rudolf Bultmann challenges Mundle's essentially Catholic contention (also held by those of the "holy living" school, such as Bishop Bull) that in rejecting works, Paul is excluding only the "works" which are demanded by the Mosaic Law.¹⁰² Rudolf Bultmann asserts that according to Paul, the man of faith is required to keep the Law with regards to the manner of fulfillment but not with regards to the content (Romans 13:8-10).¹⁰³ Paul's protest is not aimed against the accomplishment of specific acts but against the attitude of the man who wants to prove himself before God.

Rudolf Bultmann also characterizes "grace" as the being "graciously disposed toward another." God in his grace acts as the absolutely free God who is not brought into debt by any human claim. God's grace is not kindness and goodness on His part which causes Him to take man's weakness into account. On the contrary, rather than excusing an occasional mistake or forgiving sins, God's grace repudiates this because here is located the focus of man's sin, his arrogance.¹⁰⁴

To summarize, righteousness is called "God's righteousness" because its "one and only foundation is God's grace". It is God-given and God-adjudicated. The Jews were blind to the righteousness from God because they understood it as "their" own which they achieved through their exertion in fulfilling the "works of the law."

Rudolf Bultmann asserts "God's righteousness' means the righteousness from God which is conferred upon him (man) as a gift by God's free grace alone".¹⁰⁵ The issue for him regarding the interpretation of the phrase "righteousness of God" centered in whether (1) the genitive Θεοῦ is subjective, in which sense the "righteousness of God" would refer to the attribute of God which belongs to Him and is revealed by the Gospel, or whether (2) the genitive Θεοῦ is objective in which case the "righteousness of God" would denote the gift which God grants to the believer and by which God can proclaim the believer "right".¹⁰⁶ Rudolf Bultmann's ruling concern is to establish that "the righteousness of God" in Paul's predominate usage solely describes God's gift given to man in stark contrast to righteousness earned by "works of the Law". He harks back to Martin Luther and the tradition of the Reformation which had inherited St. Augustine's interpretation.¹⁰⁷ Following in Martin Luther's and St. Augustine's wake, Rudolf Bultmann also conceived of the phrase anthropologically in a way which nicely harmonizes with his own understanding of Paul's whole theological approach as anthropological. Just as its polar counterpart "works of the law", the term "righteousness of God" describes what is applicable to man not God.

The dialectic may be expressed in the following way: "the righteousness of God" is man's righteousness but only in the sense that it is not man's but God's. The "righteousness of God" is ours only because it is given to us by God's bounty. To re-phrase St. Augustine, it is not ours as that which proceeds from our works, but only as that which precedes them.¹⁰⁸

Notwithstanding this, it is worthwhile noticing that Martin Luther, while explaining Romans 1:17 and 3:25 in the manner stated above, makes it clear in his lecture on Romans 3:5 that he does accept the opinion from other contexts that God is righteous in himself and that his righteousness is manifested when He punishes our unrighteousness.¹⁰⁹

This conclusion Rudolf Bultmann wants to disavow. His concept of God as that infiniteness which is known when man realizes his finiteness cannot

endure an ascription that would characterize it as having or possessing a quality of righteousness which may be manifest. To assign a characteristic of "righteousness" to God would make God into an object, betray the existential-ontological approach to being, and simply be sin.¹¹⁰

After considering the term "righteousness", Rudolf Bultmann treats "reconciliation" (cognate verb *καταλλάσσει* and *καταλλάσσω*) as a synonym of "righteousness". Strictly speaking, since in Romans 5:1 the phrase "we have peace with God" is a result of "rightwising", reconciliation is a consequence of "rightwising". However, the "we have peace with God" really only unfolds the meaning of "righteousness". The man of faith "receives" reconciliation just as "rightwising" is effected through Christ. (Romans 5:11). Moreover, the "righteousness of God" is revealed through the Gospel which is also called "the message of reconciliation".¹¹¹

"Reconciliation" denotes that a complete reversal of relation has occurred between God and man. The reversal takes place when men, who had hitherto been "enemies"¹¹² of God, do not have their sins counted against them by God.

Reconciliation is not a subjective process within man but an objective, factual situation brought about by God. It emphasizes even more clearly than "rightwising" man's radical dependence upon God's grace. Since, prior to any effort on man's part, "God made an end of enmity", all man can do is "receive" the reconciliation. As far as any subjective alteration, the "ministry of reconciliation" is given to men that they may accomplish it in themselves.

Rudolf Bultmann's diagnosis is classically Protestant in that "reconciliation" communicates the fact that God initiated and achieved the action leaving man only to "receive" it. In line with this, he recognizes its objective nature in which reconciliation occurs without man. However, what does Rudolf Bultmann envisage to be the nature of this "objective, factual situation"? To what does it actually refer? How does it make itself available to be "received"? In what way is it true to say "that a complete reversal of the relation between God and men" took place before any effort or knowledge on

men's part? The answers to these questions will be rationalized in Rudolf Bultmann's explication of the "salvation-occurrence".

In speaking of God's reconciliation as objective and man's alteration in himself as subjective, Rudolf Bultmann leaves one with the impression that he intends these occurrences to be quite separate and distinct movements immediately disassociated from one another. God makes his move on the chess board, then withdraws and leaves man to respond. How does the man, whom Rudolf Bultmann assumes was forced into the slavery of living "according to the flesh" but who must make the alteration himself, free himself for this activity? What is the relation, if any, between reconciliation and the subjective alteration? Moreover, if this is something man does, in what sense does it deserve a classification distinct from any other "work" of human effort done by the Jew to gain salvation? On another track, the query arises that if God has already accomplished "reconciliation" prior to man's response, why is man's response required? We will wait to examine Rudolf Bultmann's teaching on the "salvation-occurrence" and "faith".¹¹³

Rudolf Bultmann completes his analysis of "righteousness" with an overview of the non-Pauline, "developing church's" conception of it. He concludes that, in general, "righteousness" in the Pauline sense is herein no longer found. Paul's thought of being "rightwised" appears in I Clement but elsewhere it is rarely used in its forensic-eschatological sense. In the "developing church", the terms *δικαιοσύνη* and *δίκαιος* assume a predominantly ethical sense of moral "uprightness".¹¹⁴ Rudolf Bultmann perceives this as an indication that an ideal of moralistic piety was beginning to replace an eschatological consciousness.¹¹⁵

One must bear in mind that the sources from which he claims to derive the material for the "non-Pauline" and "developing church" are books traditionally considered to be Pauline such as Ephesians, Colossians, and the Pastoral Epistles, except for Philemon and I Thessalonians. In addition, he aggregates these books with the remainder of the New Testament and

apocryphal books and grants them all equal authority. This is not the occasion to discuss authorship and canonicity, but, needless to say, Rudolf Bultmann's procedure influences what he comprehends as the boundary and content of authoritative Pauline theology. Moreover, the implication is that what is not Pauline or Johannine in the New Testament is not to be treated with the same status accorded to them. It is not far from the truth to say that for Rudolf Bultmann the authoritative canon is whatever he considers to be Pauline or Johannine.¹¹⁶

SUMMARY

Rudolf Bultmann posits that Paul is the New Testament's spokesman on "righteousness". He argues that Paul as well as Jesus and Judaism retained the same "formal" concept of righteousness with its "forensic-eschatological" sense. However, they differed with him only over the manner of the possibility and actualization of righteousness. He does not include as part of the Jewish formal concept of righteousness an ethical dimension which represents a dramatic re-appraisal of the Old Testament concept of righteousness. Since the Jew and Paul agree on the formal concept in Rudolf Bultmann's treatment, he, by denying that righteousness is also an ethical term, guards himself from having to deal seriously with this dimension in Paul.

From where did Paul's unique forensic-eschatological interpretation of righteousness as explained by Rudolf Bultmann originate? If Paul as Jesus was involved in controversy with the Jews over Judaism's false righteousness (the upshot of Rudolf Bultmann's argumentation), why did Paul's and not Jesus' controversy give rise to the particular understanding of "righteousness" advocated by Rudolf Bultmann? Something more than just controversy must have been operating to give rise to Paul's understanding.

Rudolf Bultmann's "formal" analysis of New Testament "righteousness" readily coincides with the classical, Protestant interpretation. "Righteousness"

is "forensic" in the sense that one is judged to be in 'favorable standing', 'right', by the legal 'forum'. However, Rudolf Bultmann does not fully digest this legal metaphor. He does not take into account the relationship between the transgression or religious or ethical guilt (or whatever prompts a court proceeding) and the 'forum's' raison d'être, nor of the relationship of the 'forum's' verdict to the transgression or guilt. For an adequate legal analogy, certainly a verdict must directly relate to that which necessitated a judgement in the first place. Otherwise why is a judgement of the court necessary?

Furthermore, for Rudolf Bultmann the "forensic" sense is controlled by the "eschatological" sense. The declared verdict of righteousness is viewed as that verdict which is rendered at the eschaton and not before. Please see the further comments regarding this in the Evaluation under "Forensic/Eschatological".

One may also observe that due to Rudolf Bultmann's impersonal, philosophical concept of God, he must de-personalize the forensic metaphor which makes best sense in references to personality. For a "judge", "judgement" and a "declaring" righteous in their proper reference are functions of personality. In Rudolf Bultmann's mind, there is no supernatural being which actually "judges" man. So, the New Testament references, such as "he justifies", which in their literal sense are taken to refer to a living, personal, deciding, and acting God, must be "de-mythologized" - stripped of "mythological" reference to a being, God, and viewed as descriptions of man's existence. What moral, or persuasive force and authority, is exerted on man when he realizes he is being "judged" by that which does not in fact have the unique ability of personality to discriminate and decide? By the same token, if the "judge" is de-mythologized then His "judgement" and "declaration" must be as well. What then really is being done when man is said to be "declared righteous"?

In accordance with St. Augustine and Martin Luther, Rudolf Bultmann construes "righteousness" as "extrinsic" and derived from God rather than

from man. Furthermore, righteousness is "imputed" to man in such a way that the sinner is righteous. Rudolf Bultmann repudiates both the Protestant idea that the sinner is to be regarded "as if" he is righteous only in "fiction", and the Roman Catholic contention that the sinner is really made righteous in his heart and in himself. Part of the warp and woof of Rudolf Bultmann's existential-ontological interpretation of the New Testament concept of righteousness is to disallow consistently the element of an "ethical quality" in the texture of the terms. He is faithful to the Protestant stress on righteousness as "extrinsic" and "forensic" (deriving from Melanchthon). John Wesley agrees with him insofar as he speaks of righteousness as it pertains to present justification. However, by dropping entirely the connection between morality, ethics, and righteousness he radicalizes Martin Luther and does not entertain John Wesley's delineation of justification and sanctification and its connection with an "ethical quality".

Rudolf Bultmann's handling of "righteousness" is conducive to a general existentialist tendency which is skeptical of established and traditional laws of ethics and morality which set out the general right and wrong.¹¹⁷ Man's "manner" of existence and 'how' he exists in his relation to God is the pervading interest of his theology. Moreover, he like other existentialists, avoids approaching man as though he were an object to be studied in detachment like a scientific specimen.¹¹⁸ Hence, there is reluctance to apply the empirical method to man in a way that forces man to look at himself as though he stood against himself and discovered that he had an ethical quality about himself. Rudolf Bultmann and Martin Luther arrived at much the same conclusion, Rudolf Bultmann finding Martin Luther malleable to an existential concern.

While Rudolf Bultmann confidently claims his interpretation disposes of the centuries-old, chronic question of the relation between the ethical imperative and the sinner already declared righteous, the question remains: how can, if it can, "antinomianism" be avoided if righteousness is viewed as

"imputed" and ethical sin is seen as irrelevant to righteousness? Likewise, is there a direct and necessary correlation between being "declared righteous" and ethical and moral consequence? On the other hand, with sensitivity to Rudolf Bultmann's concern, can and how can "moralism" and "works righteousness" be averted if righteousness by faith is linked to moral and ethical sin?

Following the Lutheran tradition, Rudolf Bultmann advocates rendering the phrase *δικαιώσιν Θεοῦ* in accordance with interpreting *Θεοῦ* as an "objective genitive". It is to be understood as a "gift" from God bestowed on man rather than as a characteristic of God.

Rudolf Bultmann forks away from the classical Christian understanding of "righteousness", not in the fact that he sees it as "eschatological", but in how he perceives it as "eschatological". Interpreting it through existential-ontological spectacles, he "historizes" and individualizes to man's present, existential, individual existence what was traditionally conceived of as (literally) referring to the Last Judgement at the end of time and space.

In connection with this, Rudolf Bultmann's eschatological interpretation is beset by important, inconsistencies. If the early Christian community had no interest in "real history" but regarded itself eschatologically, why did it still look for an imminent end to "real history" with its chronology and orders and become disillusioned when it failed to occur? Therewith, regarding itself eschatologically, it would not have determined that the end of the world had failed to arrive. Moreover, if the "early Christian community" had no fixed "month or year" in which they expected the 'Son of Man's' coming, how and why could they be disillusioned that He "failed" to come when they had not determined in the first instance when He was to come or that His coming was not still imminent?

On the other hand, if they thought "chronologically" and were looking for the destruction of nature and the cessation of human life in a final catastrophe, how would they conclude that it had already taken place when

they knew it had not? Furthermore, if Paul presented the solution to the delay of the parousia of Christ, why was it not recognized as such by his followers? Similarly, if "the founder of Christian theology" thought "eschatologically", why did the immediately post-Pauline, developing Church think "chronologically"? Can we so readily conclude then that there was "the problem of eschatology" which Rudolf Bultmann claims called forth a "new understanding of eschatology"?

While Rudolf Bultmann's forensic description of "righteousness" falls within the mainstream Protestant form, his unique departure had already occurred in setting "righteousness" against the background of a prior understanding of the existential-ontological analysis of man's existence prior to faith. The existential-ontological understanding of man's existence is further unfolded in its possibility for life in the present through Paul's understanding of righteousness in its "eschatological" sense.

His "eschatological" understanding of "righteousness" is creative but speculative and not without its important inconsistencies.

His approach to the New Testament history seems to apply, in tandem with an existential method, the Hegelian method of "thesis-antithesis-synthesis" in uncovering the developed understanding of the terms "eschatology" and "righteousness". Rudolf Bultmann conceives the New Testament as though it is simply a consequential composite of mental and intellectual jousting between rival and reacting parties and communities rather than the documents of a more united, spontaneous, rapidly spreading movement of substance whose words and expressions were chosen to communicate the content of real, objective events, actual occurrences, and life experiences in time and space. The somewhat mercurial and duplex interpretation of "history", "world", and "eschatology" which is attributed by Rudolf Bultmann to the first generation of the Christian movement resembles more a twentieth-century construction.

1. Rudolf Bultmann, Primitive Christianity In Its Contemporary Setting, trans. The Reverend R. H. Fuller (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983) pp. 48f.
2. It also could be used in the specific sense of judicial impartiality.
3. While these precepts of righteousness and morality are regarded as the commandments of God who requires righteousness and justice, they contain no general principles from which duties may be deduced. Common sense was an adequate guide regarding what was necessary to maintain the community welfare.
4. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, 49f.
5. One wonders if this neglect evinces the tendency in him to play down at this point the Old Testament's importance in connection with Paul.
6. Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Lantero (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958) pp. 110, 119; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 189.

He leaves out altogether any attempt at a systematic study of Jesus' usage of the δικαίου__ word group δικαίος, δικαιοσύνη, δικαίω, δικαίως. While the word group appears in at least fifty-three references in the Gospels, only a very few of the relevant passages receive any comment or treatment from him. One may conjecture that Rudolf Bultmann's rationale for this deletion would be the supposition that the authenticity of this word group in Jesus' mouth is questionable.
7. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 80; Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, p.72.
8. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 80.
9. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, p. 72. In contrast to the prophets, Bultmann states that Jesus is not concerned with social righteousness.
10. Curiously, Bultmann is able to use I Corinthians 6:11 as representing in one context the voice of the "Hellenistic church's" sentiments, and on other occasions the speech of Paul. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 72, 85, 136, 271.
11. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 136.
12. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 232.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., pp. 232f.
15. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 270.
16. See, Romans 11:17; Galatians 3:11.
17. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 271.

18. Righteousness is wedded with other terms that also denote the state of salvation, such as "redemption" and "consecration" in I Corinthians 1:30; Ibid.
19. He leaves us equally enmeshed in mystery by not discussing further how and in what ways it is ambiguous.
20. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 271. This is a curious statement by Rudolf Bultmann. After this statement, this (ethical) emphasis suddenly vanishes from his purview (except in connection with the wayward understanding of the "developing church"). The twofold emphasis that he does develop in his ensuing description is "forensic" and "eschatological".
21. The German noun for righteousness is "Gerechtigkeit" which stems from the verb of court parlance, "rechtfertigen", meaning "to justify", "to warrant". Collins, German-English; English-German Dictionary, 1983, s.v. Gerechtigkeit and rechtfertigen. Kendrick Grobel, the translator of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament resurrects the Middle-English verb "rightwise" (which is the true English counterpart of the adjective "righteous" and noun "righteousness") in an attempt to circumvent the Latin cognates of "justify", Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, footnote p. 253.
22. Collins, German-English; English-German Dictionary, s.v. "forum".
23. Ibid., s.v. "verantwortlich".
24. Bultmann, Essays, p. 64; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 272.
25. Bultmann, Essays, p. 64.
26. The term ~~κρίναι~~ ^{πρὶν} to prevail -- provides the parallel thought.
27. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 272.
28. Romans 2:13, Genesis 15:6; 4:3, 5, 22, and Galatians 3:6.
29. Leviticus 7:18, II Samuel 19:19.
30. J. A. Ziesler, The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 1f.
31. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. IV, Part 1: The Doctrine of Reconciliation, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1956), p. 95.; Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns, 6th ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 93.
32. As John Henry Newman attested, justification is a declaration of righteousness. Hans Küng attributed Catholic exegetical aversion to this view to its close association with the Lutheran notion of a "purely" forensic pronouncement; Küng, Justification, pp. 208-10f.

Emil Brunner basically concurs with Karl Barth when he explains, "God declares the sinner righteous; that is what justification means". He attests that Paul's word was taken from the language of the law courts in which a man who is accused is acquitted of guilt and declared innocent. Nevertheless, Emil Brunner clarifies

this by his perception that because δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ stems from Hebrew thinking, the thought of "judge" ought to be subsumed under and included in the thought of "Lord" and "King". The thought of "judge" is the product of the will of God who wills as the Lord to assert his authority over the creation that is right. God as King creates what is right rather than as in the thought of "judge" who only finds and perceives what is just. Emil Brunner, Dogmatics, Lutterworth Library, vol. 37, 3 vols., Vol. 3: The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith, and The Consummation, trans. David Cairns in collaboration with T.H.L. Parker (London: Lutterworth Press, 1962), pp. 200, 203.

Norman Snaith argues that as the Hebrew picture did not generally involve a law court, the forensic and judicial sense ought to be abandoned as the primary sense. With Paul, the whole world of human affairs is the court; Norman Snaith, The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament (London: The Epworth Press, 1944), p. 167.

33. Bultmann, Theology, 1, p. 273.

34. Though, as he admits, the future tenses in Romans 3:20 and 3:30 are perhaps not genuine futures, they are gnomic (logical) futures. Likewise, the present tenses of Galatians 2:16, 3:11, and 5:4 are the timeless presents of a didactic statement which may apply to a decision of God in coming judgement in spite of the tense.

While John Wesley agrees that Romans 2:13 refers to an eschatological judgment, he does not accept as Rudolf Bultmann that this future event has already occurred in the present.

35. Also, Bultmann affirms that Barth rightly interprets the phrase in Romans 8:10 "your spirits are alive because of righteousness" as "because righteousness has been established". Further corroboration is shown in Romans 8:30, 9:30, and in I Corinthians 6:11 which states "you were rightwised"; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 274.

36. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 274.

37. As the meaning in I Corinthians 1:7, so also in Romans 2:5; I Corinthians 3:13; Romans 8:18f; II Thessalonians 1:7, 2:3,6,8; I Peter 1:5,7; 4:13; 5:1; Luke 17:30.

38. John Macquarrie, Existentialism (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985), pp. 128-132.

39. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 275f.

40. Ibid., p. 276. Bultmann assures us that viewing righteousness from the forensic-eschatological sense guards one from misunderstanding righteousness as ethical perfection.

41. Rudolf Bultmann, History and Eschatology, The Gifford Lectures, 1955 (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1957), p. 23. This myth conceived of the course of the world in likeness to the annual periodicity of nature. Just as seasons go round and round, so all the events of the old year return again.

42. Greek and Stoic Philosophy developed the idea that the world would end by returning to Zeus. It would then begin again so that life, as it had been known (e.g. even Plato), would begin again. Further, the Babylonian tradition "historicised" cosmic mythology when it viewed humanity as passing through eras such as in Daniel where periods and empires in history like the natural process passed through seasons. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, pp. 24f.
43. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, pp. 26f.
44. Ibid., p. 27f.
45. Ibid., p. 29. Several observations are in order at this point. While Rudolf Bultmann assumes a more or less neat and tidy development of this myth of the periodicity of nature, caution is required in the assumption that the different "speculations" expressed in the different cultures are (1) the developments of this myth of the periodicity of nature (2) the result of "development" and borrowing as opposed to "speculations" which may have arisen quite independently of one another. Moreover, Rudolf Bultmann considers their differences within a presupposition that they are already similar. One assumes that he has been sufficiently convinced by the data, but the critic would want to fully evaluate the similarities against the distinctions before arriving at this conclusion.

In line with this observation, because Rudolf Bultmann conceives of the "cosmic mythology" as having originated and developed in secular cultures, one must come to the conclusion that the Old Testament is ignorant of eschatology (except for Daniel--Bultmann's argument) so that Daniel and the New Testament's understanding harks back to a completely secular myth. Should Rudolf Bultmann credibly discount the eschatological content in such passages as Ezekiel chapters 38-39, Zechariah chapter 14, Isaiah chapters 24,25,66, and Joel chapter 3? Is this not eschatology "in the true sense of a doctrine of the end of the world and a succeeding time of salvation"? Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 27.

The dramatic proclamation of the Lord's destruction of the earth, in Isaiah 24:1,3, etc. and consequent swallowing up of "death for ever" (Isaiah 25:8) is hardly anything less than a teaching "of the end of the world and a succeeding time of salvation". Furthermore, Isaiah chapter 66 ends with a declaration of the "new heavens and the new earth". Passages in other books which refer to world catastrophe followed by the Lord's victory and salvation are seen in Ezekiel 38-39, Joel 3:9-21, Zechariah 14.

Rudolf Bultmann maintains that the Old Testament has predictions of doom but they are only related to Israel and its enemies and not the whole world; Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 28. Much to the contrary, a reading of most of these passages pellucidly testifies that it is an earth-wide catastrophe envisioned which in some description extends to cosmic proportions (e.g. Isaiah 24).

The question of eschatology in the Old Testament is related to chronology. If other Old Testament books are included along with Daniel as books which present eschatology, then it is certainly a debateable point as to who influenced whom regarding eschatology. Did the Babylonians and Persians affect the Hebrews, or *vice versa* or both/and or neither?

Furthermore, Rudolf Bultmann leans most heavily upon 4 Ezra as a resource for the strategic formulations of "later Judaism". One must keep in mind when he discusses "later Judaism" and "Jewish eschatology", he is discussing Jewish writings that post-date Jesus. These apocryphal books to which he refers such as 4 Ezra, 2 Enoch, and Syriac Baruch are mongrel books written in the latter half of the first century of the Christian era. R. H. Charles, Religious Development Between the Old and The New Testament, Home University Library of Modern Knowledge, ed. Herbert Fisher et al. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1914), pp. 239-52. It must be admitted that these books are not without their difficulties. Bruce Metzger states the problems of composition and transmission in II Esdras (4 Ezra) are "extremely complicated". Moreover, it was not likely written until about the end of the first century A.D. Bruce Metzger, An Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 22.

Even if, for the sake of argument, one grants Rudolf Bultmann his claim that Daniel is the only Old Testament book with true eschatology, Daniel was (even at a late dating) a recognized part of the Hebrew Scriptures two hundred years before 4 Ezra and Baruch were written. Therefore, Daniel would seem a not unlikely candidate for influencing later Jewish thought.

46. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, p. 87. Furthermore, one must be careful not to misread Rudolf Bultmann's tracing of apocalyptic development. One can easily be led to the impression that Jesus got his eschatological preaching from the "Jewish apocalyptic" writers or it was reckoned to him by his later disciples. Indeed, Rudolf Bultmann hesitates in drawing this conclusion for he lacks definitive evidence to do so. He shows how Jesus differs from the apocalyptics, yet also states that Jesus' message "is connected" with the hope of these apocalyptic circles described in the literature of "later Judaism". By the same token, while it is as valid to say (even more so since Jesus' identity and concurrence with the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures can be established) Jesus is connected with the hope of the Old Testament, he does not choose to make this point; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p 4.

In Rudolf Bultmann's discussion of eschatology in his books, Primitive Christianity and History and Eschatology, chapters on what amounts to be eschatology in "later Judaism" precede chapters on the examination of Jesus' teaching. In History and Eschatology, immediately following his presentation of "later Judaism's" formulations of eschatology, he introduces the section on the New Testament and Jesus' preaching by saying, "In the New Testament both the Old Testament view of history and the apocalyptic view are preserved but in such a way that the apocalyptic view prevails"; Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 31. A casual reading might lead one to conclude that since the Old Testament as a whole, in Rudolf Bultmann's opinion, does not have an apocalyptic view, the established apocalyptic view he is referring to must be the one of "later Judaism" of which he just finished describing.

Farther, when he speaks of the apocalyptic view being "preserved" so that it "prevails" in the New Testament, one can easily interpret this as meaning the New Testament kept what was already in existence in the circles of later apocalyptic Judaism. Can the New Testament have kept something we do not know was even in fixed form till the latter part of the first century A.D.? His procedure is

not only open to misinterpretation, but it also begs the issue of whether and to what extent one can really speak of apocalyptic Judaism as being a fixed entity before Jesus' preaching and the writing of the New Testament books. The misinterpretation of which we speak seems further perpetrated by the fact that his method is to compare Jesus' preaching with "later Judaism" rather than vice versa, implying that "later Judaism" is the established standard and trend setter; Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, pp. 86-93.

47. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 248; Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 33.

To assert that the "early Christian community" or Paul "took over" some of the themes and content of the pseudepigrapha which contained the apocalyptic motifs is questionable since this apocalyptic literature is not necessarily contemporaneous with the chief New Testament writings. Further, one must keep in mind that, according to R. H. Charles, such a book as Syriac Baruch was written to bolster the declining Judaistic faith and in part to counter the attacks of a growing and aggressive Christianity; Charles, Religious Development, p. 247. It is not unreasonable to argue that it was Christianity which had the aggressive, unique and thrusting message whose themes opponents were forced to grapple with and to imitate.

48. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 37; Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 37.

49. The Oxford Dictionary of The Christian Church, ed. F. L. Cross, 2nd ed., rev. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), s.v. "Johannes Weiss".

50. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 38.

51. He offers several reasons for his argument. In contrasting the early Christian community with the Old Testament, he supports his argument by citing the lack or irrelevance of any genealogical connection between God's new people and old. Since Abraham is the father of all believers, Gentiles and Jews, the continuity is not a growing continuity but one created by God; *Ibid.*, p. 35.

There is ample New Testament evidence to contest this premise. Rudolf Bultmann does not include in his reckoning Matthew and Luke's belaboring of the tracing of Jesus Christ's genealogical lineage back through the Old Testament to Abraham and Adam (Matthew 1 and Luke 3). Moreover, not only did Jesus confine his ministry to the Jews, but he also claimed that "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). This example is continued by the apostles and disciples as they preached at first to the Jews and later found the concept of preaching to the Gentiles as almost incomprehensible (Acts 10, particularly vv. 34-39, Acts 11:1,19).

While Rudolf Bultmann acknowledges Stephen's and Paul's surveys of Israelite history in Acts chapters seven and thirteen, he will not allow that these reviews of history show historical continuity. This ignores Peter's claim in Acts chapter two that the Holy Spirit's coming on the day of Pentecost is a realization in time and space of what was already known and spoken of in Joel's time and space. Peter says all the prophets from Samuel proclaimed "these days"; see Acts 3:24.

If there were no conscious historical continuity intended, why did Peter and the apostles explicitly link their movement with one that was antithetical to their own? The favorable parallels drawn by the early community between themselves and "our fathers" convincingly cast doubts on Rudolf Bultmann's premise. Stephen argues to show how God's work in the present is related to His work among the Christians' forefathers of the past. There are repeated references drawn by the Christian disciples which speak of a welcome consciousness of historical continuity and relationship with Israel. The disciples identify historical Israel's God as their own God. Peter said, "The God of our fathers raised Jesus..."; see Acts 5:30. They also see themselves as His children, descendants and continuing recipients of this same Old Testament God's speaking and acting in history, who once had spoken and acted on their fathers' behalf. In the speech which Rudolf Bultmann acknowledges, Stephen (and likewise Paul at Antioch) repeatedly refers to the Jews as "our fathers", "our race", and "brethren"; See, Acts 7:1,12,15,19,38,39,44,45; Acts 13: 16f,26,32f,38. Again, in Romans chapter eleven, Paul identifies the Christian movement as the remnant of Israel, an ingrafting into the original Jewish root.

52. Bultmann,, History and Eschatology, p. 36.
53. Ibid., p. 30.
54. Ibid., p. 36.
55. Ibid., p. 30.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., p. 36.
58. Ibid., pp. 36, 38.
59. Ibid., p. 36.
60. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 255; see also, H. O. Thomas, "Bultmann's Understanding of Sin", p. 11.
61. Ibid., p. 29.
62. Ibid., p. 38.
63. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 37.
64. Ibid., p. 41.
65. W. D. Davies maintains that Paul belonged to the mainstream of first-century Judaism and that there is a great variance among scholars as to the extent to which the apocalyptic movement formed an integral part of rabbinic Judaism; W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (London: S.P.C.K., 1948), pp. 1, 9f.
66. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 41.

67. The question arises that if "Paul no longer looks into the history of peoples and the world nor into a new history", and the early Christian community did not trace the historical continuity with Israel, why is Paul (as Rudolf Bultmann allows) concerned to wrestle with the difficulty of the fulfillment of promises (in Romans 9-11) which were rooted and interwoven in the history of the Jewish people?

Moreover, if the history of the nation and the world had lost interest for Paul, why does he continue to expect the cosmic drama to be acted out as portrayed in the apocalyptic picture of the future, of the parousia of Christ, et cetera? Ibid., pp. 41f. If Paul existentially interprets history past, present, and future in terms of the individual, why does he regress into viewing it again from a "worldly" perspective? Furthermore, Rudolf Bultmann, who in his research has a controlling interest in studying the sources for Paul's thought, does not investigate the derivation of Paul's anthropological view of apocalyptic history.
68. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 306f; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 254.
69. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 307.
70. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 302f.
71. This requires Paul both at once to "historize" and to view literally the "parousia". While Rudolf Bultmann still allows that Paul maintains an apocalyptic picture of the future, for Paul it does not figure largely or significantly in his essential thought and is treated more or less as a useless appendage. The real bliss for Paul is righteousness which is already present. The New Aeon is already reality. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 42.
72. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 302.
73. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 49.
74. Ibid., p. 47.
75. Ibid., pp. 49f.
76. Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation does not make unattractive or untenable the view that the "chronological" concept had always been the view of the community from the earliest days. He proposes that when the earliest Christian community's expectation of the 'Son of Man's' appearing in the clouds of heaven failed to occur, they were gripped by disappointment. In addition, he also supposes that "the parousia of Christ was never expected on a fixed day". If they had no definite time, no "month or year", in which they expected the "Son of Man's" coming, then they did not know exactly when he was coming. If they did not know when he was coming, how and why could they be disillusioned that he "failed" to come or that He would not still come? Ibid., pp. 38, 51.

It is conceivable that there could have been impatience (disillusionment is too strong a word in light of New Testament evidence or lack of evidence) because He had not yet materialized, but not because he failed to appear. Was there then "the problem of eschatology" which Rudolf Bultmann claims demanded a "new

understanding of eschatology"? Then what elicited this new "eschatological" understanding of Paul and from where did it originate? Is it not at least as likely that Paul is to be interpreted presupposing a meaning of history and eschatology which is temporal and spacial and similar to those who preceded and followed him? One conclusion one can draw as a result of Rudolf Bultmann's findings is that "chronological meaning" cannot be easily dismissed from the New Testament but, as he has shown, is very much a part of it.

One issue that results from Rudolf Bultmann's conception of the "developing church's" emphasis on "chronological meaning" is the redefined extent of salvation and justification. While Paul conceived of "the old man" as being freed from the power of sin in baptism, the "developing church" taught that only forgiveness is granted for the guilt incurred before baptism. Therefore, the time after baptism, the 'between' is now regarded as the limited time in which the Christian must prove himself in the face of the imminent judgement. Rather than obedience being the self-evident fruit of the gift of salvation or of justification and of freedom, it is action done with the intention of effecting future salvation. The believer still remains under the imperative, but the imperative no longer stands in the dialectic relation to the indicative. Where this occurs, the imperative means at the same time to stand under grace. Under the developing church's concept, salvation is a new opportunity gained in which man must fulfill the condition for justification in the future judgement by good works. One cannot necessarily conclude that Rudolf Bultmann does not see in Paul a teaching of on-going accountability after justification. However, the nature of the responsibility after justification is that which distinguishes Paul from the "developing church". Ibid., p. 50.

77. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 88; Bultmann, Essays, p. 63.

78. Luther, Lectures on Romans, p. 4.

79. Rudolf Bultmann wants also to avoid the supposition, such as Sanday and Headlam more recently entertained, in which the sinner is said to be "regarded as if" he were righteous when in fact he is not. Their argument states that the verb δικαλοῦν means "to pronounce righteous" as in the manner of a judge. In so far as the person pronounced righteous is not in actuality righteous, righteousness has the meaning only of "amnesty" or "forgiveness". This state is referred to as a "fiction". The Reverend William Sanday and The Reverend Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans, 5th ed., The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, ed. The Reverend Samuel Rolles Driver, The Reverend Alfred Plummer, and The Reverend Charles Augustus Briggs (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1907), p. 36.

John Wesley, as Rudolf Bultmann, accepts that this "forgiveness" is actual righteousness. However, John Wesley also believes that a "real" moral righteousness is formed in man in sanctification rather than in justification as the Catholics conceive.

Nevertheless, there is agreement among the above that δικαλοῦν does not comprehend the idea of "making righteous"; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 30.

80. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 277.

81. Ibid., p. 276.
82. Ibid., pp. 124, 141. The Roman Catholic Hans Küng concurs that justification means an extrinsic non-imputation of sins, a declaring just. However, he submits, Martin Luther's exclusively nominalistic interpretation of justification as extrinsic is what was rightly condemned by the Council of Trent; Küng, Justification, pp. 212, 217f.

Karl Barth comments that God's righteousness is always a strange righteousness, iustitia aliena, because it is first and essentially iustitia Christi. Only because it is Christ's righteousness can it be said to be "our" or "my" righteousness; Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. IV, part 1, p. 549.

Emil Brunner assents to this position when he states that man can find security only in the righteousness which is "outside of us and alien to us" -- in Christ Himself; Brunner, Dogmatics, vol. III, p. 206.

However, Rudolf Bultmann, to the likely consternation of Protestants and Catholics alike, certainly John Wesley, seems to radicalize Martin Luther by confidently arguing that the concern of an ethical quality of man or ethical sin does not relate and is irrelevant to righteousness.

83. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 276; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 88.
84. Küng, Justification, pp. 213-18.
85. McGrath, Iustitia Dei, vol. 2, p. 13.
86. Karl Barth arrives at the same conclusion that man is righteous. He asks to what extent justification is not a mere "as if". The answer depends on whether justification is genuine, that is, whether the right of God which gives right to men and the right of man given by God is a true and indisputable right. Karl Barth affirms that Jesus Christ offered himself as a sacrifice and became obedient. In this way, He was the righteous One. With the creation of this new man, God has vindicated Himself to us in pronouncing His verdict upon us. This man is righteous for us all and is our righteousness before God; Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. IV, part 1, pp. 517f, 95.

Karl Barth concurs with the Reformer's typical view that God looks upon and does not see our sin but Christ's righteousness. As Martin Luther expressed it, Christ's righteousness shines in the Christian; Luther, Romans, ed. Pauck, p. 5.

Karl Barth insists that this righteousness has to do with a "declaring righteous". However, it is more than just a verbal action. It is a declaring righteous which can be called a making righteous. Man is righteous before God; Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. IV, part 1, p. 95.

John Wesley might ask Rudolf Bultmann and Karl Barth if man is really righteous, then in what sense, if any at all, is man under necessity to be ethically renewed and to produce the fruit of good works?

87. Furthermore, on the basis of the main clause in II Corinthians 5:21, he argues that it would be a mistake to think God treated the (ethically) sinless Christ "as if" he were a sinner. Rather, God made the sinless Christ to be a sinner (forensically) by letting him die as one accursed.
 88. Bultmann, Theology, 1, p. 277.
 89. Ibid., p. 278; Ernst Käsemann, New Testament Questions of Today, trans. W. J. Montague (Philadelphia: Fortress press, 1979), p. 175.
 90. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 278.
 91. See Romans 3:21; 5:1; 9:30-32; 10:4-6; Galatians 2:16; 3:6,8,11,24; 5:5; Phillipians 3:9; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 279f.
 92. Bultmann, Essays, p. 42.
 93. Ibid.
 94. Ibid., pp. 43f.
 95. Ibid., Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 225f, 240.
 96. Bultmann, Essays, p. 45.
 97. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 281.
 98. G. E. Ladd, A Theology of The New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975), p. 438; Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 222; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 278.
- If faith as the condition for rightwising did not arise until the Judaizing polemic, what prompted Paul's opposition to the Judaizers in the first place? Was not the faith upon which righteousness was conditioned already presupposed in the Pharisee Paul's conversion to Christ? In other words, the faith by which Paul became a Christian believer already put him into contrast with Judaism.
99. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 270.
 100. See Romans 6:19, Galatians 2:21; 5:4. The term "grace" is coupled with the word "faith" in contrast to the Law in Romans 4:14-16.
 101. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 281f.
 102. Rudolf Bultmann acknowledges that on the assumption that faith is an act of obedience, "There is always a certain measure of activity on man's own part assumed in it." He argues that in Romans 4:4f, Paul distinguishes between "grace" (or "gift") and "due" (or wage) in such a way that work is understood in the fundamental sense -- "to earn claim to a reward".
 103. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 283.
 104. Ibid., p. 284.
 105. Ibid., p. 285; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 80-82.

106. C. H. Dodd, The Bible and The Greeks (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935), p. 9; David Hill, Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, vol. 5, gen. ed., Matthew Black (London: Cambridge at the University Press, 1967), p. 155; Käsemann, New Testament Questions, p. 169.
107. Using St. Augustine as his reference, Martin Luther insisted that the term "righteousness of God" in Romans 1:17 and 3:25 must not be understood as the righteousness by which God is righteous in himself, but as the righteousness by which we are justified; Luther, Romans, ed. Pauck, pp. 18, 109.
108. Luther, Romans, ed. Pauck, pp. 18, 109.
109. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
110. In debate with Rudolf Bultmann, Ernst Käsemann suggests that understanding the "righteousness of God" exclusively as "gift" necessarily leads to viewing it as referring primarily to the individual and exclusively from the context of the doctrine of man; Käsemann, New Testament Questions, pp. 180f.

Emil Brunner finds that Martin Luther's rendering of the "righteousness of God" as "righteousness that counts in God's sight" falls short. He is nevertheless sympathetic to Martin Luther's rejection of the traditional Latin conception of iustitia Dei as the righteousness of the judge who rewards and punishes. When the "righteousness of God" is understood from its Hebrew mind set, Emil Brunner takes it to mean "The will of God who wills to assert his authority over the Creation as the Lord, and to establish his Lordship. The product of this will and this action is what is right."

On the one hand, the element of the righteousness of the judge who removes injustice and vindicates right is incorporated in the thought of God as judge. However, God's action is not to be conceived as a judge who finds and perceives what is just, but that of the King who creates what is just. Emil Brunner states, "The Divine action in Jesus Christ is the action through which alone God's purpose breaks through." Through Christ, love is revealed as the will of God when man recognizes the lie of his own righteousness. The stress is laid not on judicial righteousness, but on the kingly righteousness, God's Lordship, which manifests itself in the act of pardon which has always been the King's privilege. So, in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann, Emil Brunner argues that the "righteousness of God" centralizes the purpose of God rather than the salvation of man; Brunner, Dogmatics, vol. III, p. 203f.

For Karl Barth, the "righteousness of God" focuses upon God. This seems to be implied in his assertion that in God's maintaining a covenant with man, He distinguishes Himself as the One who does what is in the highest sense the right. That is, He does that in which He himself is right, which befits Him, and is worthy of Him as God. In the covenant, He reveals Himself as the One He is, the One who is bound to His own nature, and who is true to Himself; Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. II, Part 1: The Doctrine of God, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, trans. T. H. L. Parker et al (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1957), p. 384.

A third viewpoint tends to comprehend both the subjective and objective aspects. C. H. Dodd insists that the "righteousness of

God" is displayed in an objective revelation of God's activity in the life and death of Jesus Christ which justifies His people -- puts them in the right -- and delivers them from evil; The Rev. Professor James Moffatt, ed., The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, C. H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to The Romans (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1937), pp. 10, 12.

Similarly, David Hill proffers that God's righteousness is manifested in his action in Jesus Christ which shows that "he is righteous in himself" because He does right and puts others in the right who do not deserve it; Hill, Greek Words, pp. 156-58.

111. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 285f.
112. This can have either active ("hostile") or passive ("hated") meaning. As Romans 8:7 indicates, God's displeasure with man is a result of man's hostility to God.
113. What about the "old" question of how God is to be reconciled? Rudolf Bultmann alleges that the pagan notion that man must do something to propitiate God never occurs to Paul. Instead, men need the reconciliation which God has conferred -- not by the removal of their subjective resentment toward Him, but by the removal of the objective state of enmity which existed between Him and men as a consequence of sins. Paul rarely speaks of the "forgiveness of sins", evidently because of its ambiguity. It intonates release from the guilt of former sins when what is important for Paul is the release from sinning (from the power of sin); Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 286f.

The issues raised in this section -- such as the nature of the human, free will, the removal of the state of enmity between God and man and forgiveness of sins -- are discussed under the headings of the "salvation-occurrence" and "faith".

114. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 212, 167; For the ethical sense, see also: for Barnabas, p. 163; for Hebrews, p. 167; for II Clement, p. 170; for the Letter of Polycarp, p. 172; for Ignatius, p. 197. In I Peter, grace does have a specific, Pauline meaning but "rightwising" is not mentioned, p. 182.
115. Ibid., p. 213.
116. If he had included the traditionally held Pauline books in his defined Pauline corpus and given equal status to the other New Testament books, he would have had an even greater body of evidence challenging him to consider one dialectic from which he shrinks, that "righteousness" for Paul has both "forensic-eschatological" meaning and also moral and ethical meaning or, at least, moral and ethical implications.

Furthermore, Rudolf Bultmann is intolerant of certain traditionally deemed Pauline books as Martin Luther was to the epistle of James. In Rudolf Bultmann's case, he views the hallmark of Paul's theology as its unique, creative handling of the Christian polemic with the Jews. As Martin Luther discounted the book of James because it excluded the great doctrine of justification by faith, so there seems to be a correlation between Rudolf Bultmann's failure to find Paul's signature on a book and its lack of a significant passage(s) lambasting the Jewish system of the Law and the Jews' striving to establish "their own righteousness".

117. Macquarrie, Existentialism, pp. 207, 268f.
118. Ibid., pp. 134ff.

CHAPTER TWO

GRACE AS SALVATION-OCCURRENCE DESCRIBED

INTRODUCTION

After expounding the New Testament's conception of "righteousness", Rudolf Bultmann shifts his concern to the interrelated subject of "God's grace".¹ Before advancing to Paul's representative description of grace, he presents a brief overview of Jesus' understanding. In his inquiry into Jesus' teaching on grace, he implicitly responds to traditional liberalism's assumption that Jesus taught that grace is always available to man. In the style of dialectic theology, he argues that Jesus preached that grace can be promised to man only by God himself.² In Jesus' mind, the honest sinner knows only of his own despair because he is yet to know God's grace "for me".

The cardinal interest for Rudolf Bultmann in regards to Jesus' preaching of grace is suggested in the term "promises". Firstly, Jesus promises "the forgiving grace of God" to all those who cry "God, be merciful to me a sinner!"³ Secondly, Jesus' promise of grace is tied directly to his eschatological understanding of his calling and contrasts with Paul's preaching of grace. Jesus' summoning men to repentance is the final proof that his coming is God's grace in the last hour of the world. To those who hear his word, God's salvation is now freely offered.⁴

Specifically, Jesus only promises what is imminent and future. He points his hearers to the coming grace and reign of God. In contrast, Paul proclaims the "Jesus Christ is the forgiving word of God". While Jesus only looked forward, Paul looks backward and says that the turn of the age has occurred already in Christ. God's grace is bound to the person of Jesus in whom God's grace is freely offered to all.⁵

One observes that Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of Jesus' and Paul's preaching of grace fits consistently into his eschatological schema that pertains to "righteousness". Jesus did not announce that he himself forgave,

nor granted pardon, nor saw in himself the occurrence of the turning of the age. He only announced what God was prepared to do in the coming Reign of God. Paul, on the other hand, affirms that liberation and redemption from the old and corrupt course of the world has become a reality in Jesus Christ.

With this in mind, we proceed to Rudolf Bultmann's general description of Paul's conception of grace. Firstly, Rudolf Bultmann in dialectical fashion discusses the nature of wrath in order to gain insight into grace. Wrath, most often referring to future judgement, is exemplified by the phrase "day of wrath", which speaks of a future day when God's righteous judgement will be revealed (Romans 2:5; 5:9). Nonetheless, it also describes judgement that is constantly taking place (Romans 1:18-32). In another instance, when it is not used without temporal limitation still means divine punishment.

He says that for Paul grace like righteousness is not a quality of God such as His timeless kindness. The Gospel is not something which teaches us that God's nature which we once wrongly thought to be wrathful is henceforth known to be gracious. Not a quality, an emotion, or wrathfulness as is commonly misunderstood, the wrath of God means an occurrence - the judgement of God. God's wrath is demonstrated factually in what takes place in the heathen world in that men abandon themselves to lusts and dishonorable passions (Romans 1:24).⁶ From his observations on wrath, Rudolf Bultmann deduces two insights relevant to an understanding of grace. Firstly, God's grace is not a previously misconceived graciousness but is His now occurring act of grace. Secondly, in allusion to liberalism's assumption, he states God's prior judgship does not become obsolescent in the occurrence of the act of grace but is presupposed in it. The act of grace is simply His gracious dealing precisely as Judge. He defines God's grace as His judicial act of grace in the following manner: "It is not a mode of dealing which God has decided henceforth to adopt, but is a single deed which takes effect for everyone who recognizes it as such and acknowledges it (in faith) - 'grace' in God's eschatological deed."⁷ This deed of grace consists in the fact

that God gave Christ up to die as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men.⁸

Having reviewed Rudolf Bultmann's attempt at accounting for grace in the light of wrath, let us set forth a synopsis of his word study of the term "grace". He states that the usual word for grace is Χάρις, but Χάρισμα (gift of grace) is also used.⁹ In whatever context Paul uses "grace", it always means the same deed of God; that is, the "deed of Christ".¹⁰

Even where "grace" does not signify the eschatological occurrence, nevertheless it remains God's gracious deed or dealing which man experiences as a "gift". When, as in Paul's greetings, grace is put together with "peace", it denotes that which God does and confers upon man salvation.¹¹

According to Rudolf Bultmann, the study of "grace" may be confirmed by a look at Paul's statements about agape (love). He desires to demonstrate on the basis of Romans 5:6-8; 8:35 that this word "love" like "grace" refers to the salvation-occurrence (death and resurrection of Christ). Namely, he confirms that Paul "speaks of agape as it reveals itself in a deed, agape at work, in action".¹²

While Paul's affirmation in Romans 5:8 that "God shows his love for us" implies the sentiment of love, Paul speaks of it only as God "shows" it - by letting Christ die for us. He goes on to deduce that Paul identifies God's deed in Romans 8:39 with Christ's deed. Therefore, God's deed of love is the salvation which God accomplishes through Christ. In other words, love is Christ's "dying for all."¹³

In directing his attention to the "developing Church", Rudolf Bultmann advances the thesis that the grace of God was no longer radically understood in the 'developing church'. This was because, as was described in the previous discussion of righteousness, he saw the antithesis of "grace" and "works" to be presented rarely.¹⁴

While dealing in an orderly but brief manner with the major nuances of the word Χάρις and its similarity with another term ἀγάπη, Rudolf

Bultmann's salient interest in the investigation of the term "grace" is to establish that grace is God's eschatological deed, "the salvation-occurrence".¹⁵ While one may agree that the event of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection is the epitome and fountainhead of grace for man, not all (John Wesley included) would wish to follow Rudolf Bultmann in restricting grace's description solely to Christ's deed per se.¹⁶ Traditionally, grace has also been understood as a disposition and a function of the transcendent source, God.¹⁷

In his nominalistic approach, Rudolf Bultmann rejects characterizing grace as an inherent quality (such as a habitus as in Roman Catholicism) or an attribute or a disposition of a transcendent, personal God as though grace existed as a general category somewhere. Rather, it is a specific, concrete, "historic" event, the deed of Christ.¹⁸

Nevertheless, Rudolf Bultmann's denomination of grace as a "gift" is everywhere agreed. Further, we may observe that his identification of "grace" with "spirit", the "new situation" and "territory" in which the salvation-event places the believer is akin to other traditional determinations of grace.¹⁹ However, whereas Rudolf Bultmann interprets the "new situation" in the manner of existential-ontological description, Roman Catholics and John Wesley view grace ("sanctifying grace") as actually beginning to transform the heart and human nature.²⁰ Rudolf Bultmann's discernment of grace as a power has support in spite of the fact that this concept of power is variously interpreted.²¹

In his consideration of grace, Rudolf Bultmann does not bring out, as is sometimes done, the nuance of grace as thankfulness and thanksgiving.²² Nor does he care to engage in reflection as John Calvin and Karl Barth on grace's relation to election and free will.²³

Though Rudolf Bultmann's dialectical, theological approach protests against liberalism's optimistic identification of the workings of God's grace with Western culture, nevertheless, his description ^{of} grace does not escape his own historical situation of a war-shattered world.²⁴ Assuming his

predisposition to adhere exclusively to the "negative way" and to nominalism, he speaks of God as Judge not as He is in himself, but only as our circumstances show us what He is not. Traditional theologies such as John Wesley's, while perhaps recognizing the difficulty of stating positively who God is, would nonetheless affirm that God has disclosed who He is in Himself.

Moreover, rather than viewing God's grace and wrath as two contradictory dispositions or actions of God, Rudolf Bultmann sees them as two different understandings of the same historical occurrence. Also, implicit in his manner of argument is Martin Luther's teaching that the true knowledge of God and his saving activity is hidden in its opposite.²⁵ Martin Luther's style is demonstrated in Rudolf Bultmann's contention that God's judgement of the world could be observed from the ruin of civilization. We know that God is Judge because we witness his judgment in our historical circumstances. On the other hand, that God bestows grace in this ruin is an affirmation that can also be made and known but only in faith.

Without simply abandoning the aspect of wrath, Rudolf Bultmann gives a refreshing attempt at harmonizing wrath and grace which is not without truth. However, he leaves the sole interpretation of God's event with man. That God is not gracious does not necessarily follow from the fact that God's grace is veiled to the unbeliever. In addition, conservative theologians speak of his wrath and of his mercy as being aspects of his love, and liberal theologians emphasize his mercy and tend to leave his wrath and judgment to the Old Testament.

THE SALVATION-OCCURRENCE: PAUL'S THOUGHT-COMPLEXES

In concentrating his interest on "the salvation-occurrence", Rudolf Bultmann sets forth that the "deed of divine grace", the "word of the cross", consists in the fact that God gave Jesus Christ up to die on the cross. Christ's death and resurrection are intertwined to form what Bultmann calls "the salvation-occurrence" (Romans 8:34, 2 Corinthians 5:15; 13:4). Herein Rudolf Bultmann locates what is decisively and solely important about the person of Jesus for Paul.²⁶ However, he does acknowledge (in a statement which must be decoded) that Paul was also interested in Jesus' incarnation and earthly life but only as it was germane to Jesus' being a concrete man who lived on the earth as a Jew. Beyond this, neither Jesus' manner of life, ministry, personality, character, nor message plays any role in Paul's thought. Any "evaluation" of the historical person Jesus or of his cross by human norms according to human categories evaluates "kata sarka Christ".²⁷

The question that leaps to the fore for Rudolf Bultmann is one which is central to the concern of John Wesley as well as Martin Luther: how can the salvation-occurrence be recognized and experienced by man as the deed of grace?²⁸ Central to Martin Luther's thought was the teaching that the realities of grace and salvation were "hidden under the cross" from the natural man until faith revealed them to the believer.²⁹ As we shall discover, Rudolf Bultmann accepts this opinion and gives it an underlying, existential-ontological twist. According to Martin Luther, the meaning and realities of the cross were always present from the time of the act, even though concealed from the natural man.³⁰ However, for Rudolf Bultmann, no historical event in and of itself has objective meaning which endures every historical situation and each critical interpreter.

Nonetheless, Martin Luther, John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann seem to agree to the form of the reply to the above decisive question: only when the deed of grace is recognized and experienced can it take effect as a compelling and transforming power. Rudolf Bultmann goes on to say that only when the

challenge to accept the deed of grace as salvation-occurrence thrusts the sinner into genuine decision and he understands it to be directed at him, reaching him, and happening to him can it touch him.³¹

In an effort to answer his question, Rudolf Bultmann recognizes that Paul portrays the significance of the salvation-occurrence in terms of a number of different thought-complexes. His discussion of these figures is mainly relegated to The Theology of the New Testament, and, even there, like John Wesley's treatment, is only relatively brief. Firstly, Paul understands Jesus' death in the manner of the Jewish sacrificial practice and the juristic thinking which controls it. This interpretation regarded his death as a propitiatory sacrifice by which forgiveness of sins is effected and the guilt contracted by sins is cancelled. His death is the "hilasterion in his blood", the means of reconciliation made effective through his blood. It is by this means that God, in order to prove that He is a righteous judge, made possible the "passing over of previously committed sins" (Bultmann's translation of Romans 3:25f).³² Rudolf Bultmann assumes that while Paul follows the tradition of both the "earliest" and the "Hellenistic" church in his above usage, because the term "blood" and the idea of divine righteousness demanding expiation for former sins are infrequently employed by him, they do not represent his "characteristic view".³³

Secondly, another term that characterizes the importance of the salvation-occurrence and is related to the idea of propitiation is that of vicarious sacrifice. Also originating in cultic-juristic thinking, the sense of vicarious sacrifice is conveyed notably in the expression (ὕπὲρ ἡμῶν) "for us". "For us" can mean "instead of us" or "in place of us" (Galatians 3:13, II Corinthians 5:21). Ideas both of vicarious sacrifice and of propitiation merge in II Corinthians 5:14f. The "therefore all have died" of verse 14b interprets the phrase in 14a "that one has died for all" as having vicarious meaning. In other words, in verse 14a the εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν could mean either "one died for the sake of all" or "one died taking the place of all".

Rudolf Bultmann interprets the phrase "that one has died for all" as meaning he died "for the sake of" all.³⁴

Thirdly, the salvation-occurrence is depicted as the means by which men are "redeemed" (ransomed) from the "curse of the Law". They are redeemed from the punishment imposed upon sin (which Bultmann acknowledges is in this context of Galatians 3:13 a transgression of the Law). This third view concurs with the concept of propitiatory sacrifice in which the sacrifice cancels the guilt or punishment for guilt.

Having said this, Rudolf Bultmann reasons that the import of this "redeemed" view goes beyond the mere cancelation of guilt in a crucial way. Paul says in Galatians 1:4 that the purpose of Christ's death was "to deliver us from the present evil age". Rudolf Bultmann contends that since the "present evil age" is subject to Law and, therefore, to the power of sin and death, the freedom bought by Christ's death is not only release from punishment but also liberation from "powers". In other words, there is freedom from the compulsion to sin and from the Law itself.³⁵

All told, the essential thing is that in this later motif the categories of cultic-juristic thinking are broken through. Christ's death is not just looked upon as a sacrifice that cancels the guilt of sin, but it is "the means of release from the powers of this age: Law, Sin, and Death."³⁶

Rudolf Bultmann treats only briefly these explanations of Jesus' death. Indicative of his impatience with doctrinal "speculation", these thought-complexes are deemed to occupy little place in Paul compared to what he determines to be the greater significance of the salvation-occurrence. To the "figures" which have controlling influence over Paul we now turn.

In characterizing the salvation-occurrence and seeking further insight into how the event may be experienced, Rudolf Bultmann further considers how Christ's death can have the effect of releasing man from the powers of this age. He states that Paul answers the query when he describes Christ's death by the analogy of the death of a mystery religion's divinity. This formulation,

once attached to the initiation-sacrament of baptism and to the Lord's Supper, is received out of Hellenistic tradition and given comprehensive meaning by Paul.³⁷ In the Hellenistic formula, the initiate, the mystes, through participation in the fate of mystery-divinity by means of baptism and sacramental communion, share in the dying and reviving of the divinity. This participation delivers the mystes from death.

The Hellenistic Church gave rise to this interpretation when it described Jesus' fate in the concepts of the initiation-sacraments of the mystery religions. In addition, the Hellenistic Church conceived of Jesus as the basis for a cult whose celebration was viewed as sacramentally bringing the celebrant into a fellowship with the cult-divinity in such a way that the cult-divinity's fate avails for the former.³⁸ Paul's interpretation widens the benefits to encompass not only release from death but the simultaneous release from the power of sin. Moreover, what is true of baptism is also true of the Lord's Supper with the qualification that the Lord's Supper "proclaims" Christ's death (as well as grants a share in Christ's death).³⁹

Lastly, in Paul's attempt to explain the salvation-occurrence, Rudolf Bultmann observes that Paul retains the above mystery idea and also weds it to his interpretation of Christ's death "in the categories of the Gnostic myth".⁴⁰ In itself, the Gnostic myth contained only the notion of the Redeemer's coming and going as his humiliation and exaltation. Moreover, the myth did not necessarily imply that his earth's departure was caused by violent death. Rudolf Bultmann postulates that the mystery religion's conception combined with the Gnostic Redeemer myth in certain Gnostic groups and was organized as a mystery cult. For example, the mystery-god Attis fused with the Gnostic Redeemer-figure and resulted in an alloy that appears in Paul.⁴¹

This essentially syncretistic, Gnostic composite conceived of the Gnostic Redeemer and men (Gnostics) as a unity, one substance, one soma (body). As the Redeemer himself is a cosmic figure and not an individual person, so his soma is a cosmic entity. Therefore, what happened to the Redeemer while in

human form (on earth) happens to all who belong to the soma. As the Redeemer suffered death, so do they. As he was raised from the dead, so are they. Further, they share release from the powers from which he was freed. In the light of this understanding, Paul interprets baptism as the union of the baptized with Christ into one soma.

On account of the salvation-occurrence, the old aeon and its powers are stripped of might even though the life of the believer is not yet visible but concealed under the mask of death (2 Corinthians 4:7-12).⁴² As Adam ushered in the old mankind sealed in the transitory, so Christ through his obedience brought life and freedom from the powers (Romans 5:12-19).

In dialogical fashion, Rudolf Bultmann asks why Paul did not avail himself of the Jewish cultic and juristic thinking. He replies that in them the meaning of the resurrection had no chance to come into its rightful place, for Christ's death and resurrection are cosmic occurrences and not incidents happening in the historical past. Paul had recourse to the categories of the mysteries and the Gnostic myth because through them the salvation-occurrence could be seen as actually happening to and for and in man.⁴³ This proposal provokes the query as to why Paul viewed the salvation-occurrence as actually happening to and for and in man. What was there about the ordinary death of Jesus that suggested it could and should "happen" to others? For Rudolf Bultmann, this is an unimportant question. Perhaps the question should not be so easily dismissed. Implicit in his proposition is the fundamental, theological question "Why did Paul associate Jesus' death and resurrection with a person's individual existence?"

In Rudolf Bultmann's estimation, the mysteries and the Gnostic Redeemer myth are Paul's most characteristic and consequential thought forms for the salvation-occurrence. He adopts the general foundational assumptions of Wilhelm Bousset (whom he greatly esteemed) that primitive Christianity "grew into a cultic religion on the soil of Hellenistic syncretism, where under the influence of the mystery religions it acquired its sacramental piety, its

emphasis on the Spirit, its dualistic world view, its speculation and mythology".⁴⁴ While Rudolf Bultmann tacks on his own interpretation of "the cultic character of Pauline religion", he concurs with Wilhelm Bousset's assessment that Hellenistic Christianity is a new entity in relation to earlier Palestinian Christianity. Centring its religion in the worship of the Kyrios cult, it belongs in the same class with the mystery religions and gnosis.⁴⁵

Because of the following reasons, I do not see a sufficiently significant and highly compelling correlation between the myths and the New Testament to warrant a conclusion that Paul's description was borrowed from Hellenism and Gnosticism: (1) the late dating of the documents of the myths, (2) the subjective interpretations of the myths and of their comparison with the New Testament, (3) the disparate form and content of the myths and New Testament, (4) the preconceived assumption that Paul must have borrowed a non-Hebraic conception to explain Jesus' dying and rising, (5) the rejection of the view that the salvation-occurrence produced its own meaning which was inherent in itself, (6) the difficult question of why divine, mythological language was applied to the Jewish preacher Jesus.⁴⁶

In turning attention to John's understanding of the salvation-occurrence, Rudolf Bultmann locates in his Gospel a distinction from the common Christian interpretation. While for Paul, Jesus' death is paramount and his incarnation secondary, for John one might say the reverse is true. In Paul the incarnation is a part of the total salvation-occurrence, but in John it is the decisive salvation-event. John sees Jesus' death as the accomplishment of the "work" which began with his incarnation and as the last demonstration of the obedience which governs his life. Jesus' death takes on a twofold aspect of completion of his obedience as well as his release from his commission by which he can return to his previous glory.⁴⁷ In John He chooses death, rather than suffer death, as a passive object of a divine process of salvation as in the Synoptics.

Rudolf Bultmann alleges that John's view is not determined by the common Christian interpretation of Jesus' death as the atonement for sins. He is curious as to why John employs certain expressions (such as "takes away" and the figure of the sacrificial lamb) from the Church's common theology. He attempts to rationalize this by suggesting John regards this sacrifice as pertaining to Jesus' whole ministry rather than just his death.⁴⁸ He rather unsatisfactorily leaves the issue ill-digested by concluding that, even if John admits into his writings the Church tradition of the atonement for sin, it is a foreign element in his work.⁴⁹

After setting forth Paul's and John's formulations of the significance of the salvation-occurrence, he considers the matter of whether or not two acts of faith are necessary for belief in the saving significance of the Christ event. This leads him into a further discussion of the nature of the salvation occurrence and how it impacts and is appropriated by individual existence. Rudolf Bultmann poses a query crucial to his theological enterprise: must not the hearer have a preliminary conviction that Jesus Christ is by nature the pre-existent Son who became a man and rose from the dead if he is to believe in the saving significance of these events? In order to discuss the question, he dissects "belief" into two strands which traditionally had been taken as one cord. He says that if one takes Paul's statements as they are, then "two acts of faith or belief must be distinguished".⁵⁰ The first sense of "belief" is that which in the narrower popular usage means "willingness to consider true (believe) the facts reported of the pre-existent Son of God -- incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection from the dead -- and to see in them a demonstration of the grace of God".⁵¹ The second sense of belief is that which is a "faith which is self-surrender to the grace of God and which signifies the utter reversal of a man's previous understanding of himself -- specifically, the radical surrender of his human "boasting".⁵² Nevertheless, a homogeneous concept of faith-belief would be feasible if the two questions turned out to be one and the same question -- which, in Rudolf Bultmann's mind, they are in

the real intention of Paul. He comes to the same conclusion as traditional Christian thought but on different grounds.

He maintains that when Paul speaks of Christ as the Son of God who died for him, he speaks only as the Paul who has relinquished his own righteousness and yielded up himself to die. He knows of Christ only by knowing himself anew. He understood the proclamation of Christ as the Son of God when it reached him as the demand to give up his former life. Rudolf Bultmann seems to be saying that when Paul encountered the proclamation of Jesus as the pre-existent Son of God, the description was not taken to be a statement regarding the actual, objective nature of Jesus, but only as a demand to give up his life. Citing Romans, he submits that Paul does not present to the previously unknown congregation the salvation-occurrence whose credibility would first have to be acknowledged.⁵³

Nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann asserts that Paul wanted to expose mankind's plight (as though its credibility did not also require acknowledgement) so that the proclamation of God's salvation-deed became a question of decision. Therefore, he concludes that the proclamation of the salvation-occurrence is not a preparatory instruction which precedes the actual demand for faith but is in itself the call for faith. Rather than the presentation of the salvation - occurrence being that which the credibility has first to be acknowledged, the preaching of Jesus was an arresting question regarding his Messiahship.⁵⁴

Rudolf Bultmann explains that as Christian existence proceeds through judgement to grace, so Christ is the crucified and the risen. The cross could not be said to be the fulfillment of a tragic destiny, nor a cosmic drama, nor a spectacle for reflective observation. The cross is truly seen only when one understands that God's judgement on all self-righteousness has been given in it.⁵⁵ Only by resolve did Paul recognize the crucified Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God and Lord. When the community proclaimed him, Paul was confronted with the question as to whether or not he was the Messiah. Let

us leave the issue until farther in the paper with the recognition that for Rudolf Bultmann faith-belief is a homogeneous concept when the Son's pre-existence is regarded as the demand for faith.

The subject of Paul's "resolve" to recognize Jesus as the Messiah raises another question of great paramountcy according to Rudolf Bultmann. How did Paul achieve a "resolve" to recognize Jesus as the Lord, the Son of God? He replies that Paul says he acquired knowledge by a "revelation". He is clear that this "revelation" cannot be a supernatural communication of information because one does not acquire this kind of knowledge about the Messiah. One must either acknowledge him or repudiate him. He states, "The acknowledgement of Jesus as the Messiah is the substantive content of the 'revelation'; it means that henceforth Paul understands Jesus as the Messiah To understand another person as Lord correspondingly means to have a new understanding of oneself"⁵⁶

REVELATION AND PRE-UNDERSTANDING

Exploring more thoroughly Rudolf Bultmann's conception of how Paul acquired by "revelation" the knowledge he needed to confess Jesus as the Lord is at this point pertinent to Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the salvation-occurrence. While he directs us to the New Testament to clarify the meaning of "revelation", he insists that the pre-understanding of "revelation" must first be set forth.⁵⁷ This entails reviewing the existential-ontological, philosophical framework (to which he is greatly indebted to Martin Heidegger)^{for} which is the presupposition of "revelation".

Rudolf Bultmann tells us in approaching the New Testament that what we assume "revelation" to mean is "the disclosure of what is veiled, the opening up of what is hidden". Under this definition are subsumed two sub-definitions: One, revelation is the "communication of knowledge by the word" which is the disclosure of information previously unknown;⁵⁸ two, revelation is "an occurrence that puts me in a new situation as self", such as when an

act of friendship "reveals" one person to another person.

Rudolf Bultmann's very definition of revelation, "the disclosure of what is veiled" (which he says we accept), is indicative of his indebtedness to Martin Heidegger's phenomenological method of philosophic description. In this understanding, revealing is letting a phenomenon which has been covered-up (by "idle talk", etc.) exhibit itself as it shows itself in itself. Rudolf Bultmann accepts that man, before he achieves a "resolve" by "revelation" to accept Jesus, assumes the "general talk" and talks in an "average way" like one of the crowd. This gives man only an average understanding of the entity being discussed rather than allowing him to comprehend the entity's innermost structure. In fact, his talk closes him off from the essential meaning of the entity being discussed.⁵⁹ Rather than covering over something with prior assumptions and projecting a prior understanding on to facts, he says we must go "to the things themselves", and "let things appear as they are".⁶⁰

However, has not Rudolf Bultmann described revelation in terms which reflect his own phenomenological pre-understanding of what he thinks revelation is? Whether or not he articulates what is the general concept of revelation is debatable. Certainly, within the Christian tradition when one speaks of a typical understanding of revelation one must include the sense that it is a disclosure by a divine, supernatural agency. This idea is even central to common speech reflected in dictionaries.⁶¹ Further, "revelation" often implies a disclosure that could not be previously known by man. In assuming a Heideggerian background, Rudolf Bultmann does not consider and, in fact, discounts out of hand the possibility of persons having a first encounter with a term in the New Testament whose meaning is completely unknown to them.⁶² Nonetheless, he states that we must inquire into the New Testament to determine which of the above two concepts of revelation is right.

But before we can do this, Rudolf Bultmann explains, we must have the nature of our pre-understanding further elucidated. He characterizes our pre-

understanding in such a way that leads us necessarily to have to accept the second of his above sub-definitions before we even arrive at the New Testament's position. Namely, he places qualifications on what our definition can and cannot be. In describing the nature of our pre-understanding which he claims we have through tradition, his description of its nature goes far beyond what persons may recognize as their pre-understanding. In fact, he already interprets the pre-understanding of "revelation" in terms of what he wants and claims to find in the New Testament itself. That is, he lays down conditions for what should and should not be expected of "revelation" in the New Testament. In interpreting the pre-understanding, he disallows (just because it is wrong) that this pre-understanding could be interpreted in the manner which was crystallized and developed in the philosophical tradition of classical, "subject-object" Greek ontology. The reason for this is that "revelation" pertains to man.

In the manner of Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger, Rudolf Bultmann assumes the fundamental, existential proposition that what pertains to man can be understood only when man knows it firsthand in his own personal existence. Understanding must begin with man and his existence, and then proceed from there. Whereas "things" (not man) can be grasped by means of objective, general concepts, any given object being classed as a particular example of the "general", human existence can be seized directly only as an individual subject.⁶³ As it pertains to revelation, Rudolf Bultmann states, we "know about revelation because it belongs to our life". We cannot know "revelation" from a "subject-object" ontology as a concept as though it were something apart from our actual life.⁶⁴ To try to do so is to only know a concept of "revelation" and not "revelation" itself. Rather, one cannot know the concept without first knowing "revelation" itself. "Revelation" must begin with the "concrete man" himself and his existence before it becomes a matter for the understanding and rational process.⁶⁵

Proceeding onward, Rudolf Bultmann raises the question of how "revelation" belongs to the individual man's life. He answers that it belongs in the sense that to know "revelation" is to know ourselves as those who are dependent on "revelation". That is, the meaning of "revelation" consists in its being the means by which we achieve our authenticity which we cannot achieve by our own resources. When we know that our authenticity comes through "revelation", we likewise know that we are dependent on other than our own resources. We know that we are limited. Therefore, he concludes, to know "revelation" and authenticity is to know our limitation.⁶⁶ This is not perceptual knowledge, but what is experienced by actual living. Because we continually rebel against this limitation, it must constantly be brought to consciousness anew. "Revelation" arises in connection with the very fact of our limitation.⁶⁷

Rudolf Bultmann similarly employs "revelation" as Martin Heidegger uses "conscience" (Gewissen) which Martin Heidegger asserts offers no information about events, but comes from the self and "gives" man to understand his existential guilt, i.e. his "lack", his "limitation".⁶⁸ To Rudolf Bultmann, "revelation" lights up man's "limitation".

Rudolf Bultmann asserts that though unbelieving man knows of "revelation", he does not know it either because he can know of it only as he knows of himself and of his limitation and, thus, "always only anew and differently".⁶⁹ When one inquires into the concept of "revelation" in the New Testament, one does not ask on the basis of certain knowledge of oneself that one possesses, but on the basis of a peculiarly "not knowing knowledge".⁷⁰ If one might put it this way, he knows of himself, of his limitation, but ignorantly.

Rudolf Bultmann gives us the parameters for a New Testament inquiry. In the first place, genuine inquiry occurs only if the questioner is willing to let the understanding of his limitation, his "not-knowing knowledge", be "radicalized" by the New Testament. He must be willing to let the New

Testament speak to him. He cannot expect to find in the New Testament a mere opinion which he can classify.

Rudolf Bultmann argues that what the New Testament says about "limitation" can be understood only if one is himself motivated by the question of "limitation". Moreover, what is said about limitation by the New Testament can be affirmed or denied only in resolve.⁷¹ He proposes that unless one consistently follows through the self-understanding which he claims the New Testament's descriptive statements express, the interpretation will remain bound to the pre-understanding the reader brings with him.

Before moving to the next stage of the argument, let me make several comments. If "revelation" is "an occurrence that puts me in a new situation as self", how can I have a prior pre-understanding of "revelation" until I have been put in a new situation? This is an example of the "hermeneutical circle" which we meet in Rudolf Bultmann's theology and Martin Heidegger's philosophy. Rudolf Bultmann can only presuppose a priori that man at least has some knowledge of himself, a "not-knowing knowledge" and, hence of "revelation". If what actually is changed in the formula is only one's self-understanding, how does one really know that the content and self-understanding identified with it in the term "revelation" prior to examination of the New Testament correspond with the same content and self-understanding that the New Testament asserts? What effect would a change of content have on the self-understanding? Rudolf Bultmann's argument is deductive, assuming a sort of existential "idealism" in that it presupposes an a priori system of truth in which the enquirer, man, already knows, albeit hidden, veiled and inchoate, what may be known.

Rudolf Bultmann bequeathed to modern theology the methodology which rightly asserts that all inquirers approach the New Testament with a pre-understanding. Moreover, his point is well taken that a correct understanding hinges on whether one naively holds to his pre-understanding or lets it be "put in question". To "put in question" means to him that man's self-

understanding is "put in question". That is, man's understanding of himself "must always be laid hold of anew in resolve". Has Rudolf Bultmann let his pre-understanding be put in question? One notices that the content of "revelation" is never spoken of by him as being put in question. By not doing so, to this student's mind, he has not followed radically enough his own excellent exhortation to put the pre-understanding in question.

Rudolf Bultmann's consciously philosophical approach to "revelation" illuminates a certain aspect of revelation. However, can we assume, particularly in our global, secular and pluralistic context that all who encounter a New Testament term for the first time already have a prior intellectual knowledge of the term? Is a self-understanding of our "limitation" the only knowledge disclosed in "revelation"?

Nonetheless, his philosophical analysis specifically addresses the situation which the Kierkegaardian critique had in mind: those who have an "average" understanding of the New Testament, who take what they know for granted, and who have not reflected deeply with interior passion upon the true meaning of faith.

As we proceed to a discuss the "what" of "revelation" in the New Testament, Rudolf Bultmann says we must first of all ask how man's limitation is understood there. According to him, the New Testament teaches that "man is limited by death".⁷²

Let us bear in mind this thesis of Martin Heidegger's which is presupposed by Rudolf Bultmann. Martin Heidegger posits that man lives ahead (fore-structure, fore-throw) of himself in "projection" in which the possibilities of his "thrown" being are brought before himself.⁷³ "Dasein" (man) realizes that as long as he is, he has a "not-yet" (death) which is pending out in front of him and towards which "Dasein" "comports itself."⁷⁴ It is not a death in general which concerns him but his own death which he alone must bear.⁷⁵ Martin Heidegger predicates further that death is not just the termination of the process of life, the final limit, but that which limits the

process of man's life by permeating the whole of it through and through.⁷⁶

Rudolf Bultmann echoes Martin Heidegger when he affirms,

"Death, therefore, is plainly looked upon as constituting the limit of man's existence and, to be sure, not simply in the sense that with it life comes to an end, but rather in the sense that it constitutes a disturbance of the whole of life."⁷⁷

Rudolf Bultmann further declares in agreement with Martin Heidegger that "man rebels against death and knows that as one who is fallen under it he is not in his authenticity".⁷⁸

Certainly Christian theologians, traditional and otherwise, would agree with Rudolf Bultmann that the New Testament views death as man's limitation. However, classical theologians would probably take issue with this capital, existential assumption that death is the final limit. A theologian like John Wesley would probably interpret the New Testament as declaring eternal death and eternal judgment the ultimate limit rather than death.⁷⁹ Since Rudolf Bultmann, and also Martin Heidegger, reject eternity per se and "old-style" metaphysics", the prospect of an eternal death as the limit to man's destiny would be inadmissible to them.⁸⁰ Nonetheless, while ignoring eternity, Martin Heidegger's sober calling of man to reckon now with his ultimate destiny resembles Christian teaching.

In reflecting on their stimulating proposal that death as "limit" concerns man as he projects himself forward, one wonders if the factor of the uncertainty of knowing whether or not in fact death is the limit of existence should equally be considered as a concern for man.⁸¹ Further, one may fairly ask how the existentialist knows that death is the limit of man's existence. How do we know that after death man does not erupt into a new, unlimited and unfettered form of existence? Can the existentialist avoid backing into the duplicitous position of speaking as though he has sat on the other side of death and pronounced the verdict in the similar manner as those whom the existentialist condemns for trying to stand outside and above history in an effort to make generalizations about man?⁸²

THE "WHAT" OF "REVELATION"

We recall that Rudolf Bultmann began to inquire into how Paul achieved a "resolve" to recognize Jesus by acquiring knowledge by "revelation". This led us first to consider his proposition that prior to acquiring this knowledge it must be assumed there already exists to some extent a "preunderstanding", a "not knowing knowledge" of "revelation". We elucidated this preunderstanding and discovered that "revelation" belongs to man's life in that when we come to know that we are limited, more particularly limited by death, we know "revelation".

Now, with this in mind, we finally advance to Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation of the New Testament's concept of "revelation", the "what" of "revelation". The meaning of the New Testament term "reveal", "revelation" ἀποκαλύπτειν, ἀποκαλύψις begins to be unfurled in collaboration with its synonyms and the words which translate it. According to Rudolf Bultmann, "revelation" (*offenbarung*) means "occurrence" or "event" which are rendered in German as "Ereignis" or "Geschehen".⁸³ More specifically, Christ is spoken of as "revelation", in which case, so are his "words" (Worte) and "works" (Werke). In fact, "deed" or act (Tat) and "word" (Wort) are not only equivalent but identical with "revelation".⁸⁴ "Proclamation" (Verkündigung), κήρυγμα, is "summons" (from "aufrufen", "to call to") and also may be "revelation".⁸⁵

In setting out Paul's concept of "revelation", it is not unfair or facetious to say that Rudolf Bultmann discerns that Paul's view is expounded in harmony with what is today referred to as an existential-ontological analysis. Indeed, Rudolf Bultmann acknowledges that "all of the basic Christian concepts have a content that can be determined ontologically prior to faith".⁸⁶ Therefore, for Paul, "revelation is primarily an event".⁸⁷ Negatively, this means that revelation is not something which is defined and known from the perspective of the "subject-object" relationship. According to Rudolf Bultmann, "revelation" for Paul is not a communication of knowledge such as doctrine or dogma, whether supernatural or otherwise.⁸⁸ Neither is "revelation" to be

construed as a cosmic process that occurs outside us.⁸⁹ Christ, the word, is revelation not because any timeless content or idea or truth is disclosed.⁹⁰ Naturally, this contests the classical, Christian contention which is implicit in John Wesley that the revelation to which Paul refers in Galatians 1:12 is a direct communication from the once-dead-now-alive and ascended Jesus of Nazareth.⁹¹ Moreover, the traditional, liberal perspective of revelation is prohibited also by Rudolf Bultmann's maintenance that revelation does not mediate a world-view which one grasps, possesses, and applies.⁹² "Revelation" is not a new insight or fresh perspective that enriches one's world-view.

Rudolf Bultmann rejects these views on the basis of the existentialist-ontological critique which discerns in these positions the presupposition which regards man as something simply given who is to be examined and classified as though he were just another datum or digit in the universe. Accordingly, man fails to understand himself.⁹³

What positively does Rudolf Bultmann mean in advancing the proposition that revelation is "event" in which the "how" of the salvation-occurrence is made visible?⁹⁴ Firstly, while in the context of such passages as Romans 2:5; 8:18f and 1 Corinthians 1:7; 3:13 revelation may be used to refer to a future, eschatological event, an eschatological event of the present is also described in the same terms in Romans 1:17f and Galatians 3:23.⁹⁵ Through revelation and, more specifically, what is proclaimed in the message of Christ, man has the possibility of coming into his present, of belonging to the new aeon, the 'now'.⁹⁶ God's revelation does not designate any knowledge communicated but the event which puts the man in a new situation and enables him to understanding himself anew.⁹⁷ As "event" (occurrence or divine act), "revelation" is that which happens to man of which he can become aware. More specifically, it is something of which man necessarily becomes aware under certain circumstances (e.g., the Last Judgement). It is the opening up (the "unveiling") through God's act of the possibility of having faith (Galatians 3:23) and is effected even when no one is aware of it (Romans 1:18ff). This

means that the "revelation" of faith would be revealed (in the sense of Galatians 4:4) even if nobody believed.⁹⁸

Rudolf Bultmann finds that this same conception of "revelation" is corroborated with Paul's use of the term "manifest" (~~φανεροῦν~~ ~~φανερώσας~~) in Romans 3:21 and 2 Corinthians 4:10f. When Paul writes, "Always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies" he is speaking of an event.

In what seems to allude both to the classical, Christian concept of prevenient grace and the presupposition of Heidegger's philosophical "hermeneutical circle", Rudolf Bultmann states that "the possibility of being understood is inherent in the event".⁹⁹ He affirms that the possibility of understanding is based on the operation of the divine act (through proclamation) because "self understanding belongs to human being as such".¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, he assumes that the Gospel has clarity by nature and is understandable precisely because it is the Gospel of life.¹⁰¹

Rudolf Bultmann is once again calling upon Martin Heidegger's assumption upon which he founds his delineation of existence and Being in his book Sein Und Zeit. As we found this assumption operating in regards to "revelation" and the "pre-understanding", we encounter it here again in reference to "revelation" in the New Testament. According to Martin Heidegger's analysis, the very fact that man asks the question of "what is 'Being'?" implies that he already in his existence has a certain, inchoate understanding of 'Being'. What makes man (Dasein) distinct from other entities and is part and parcel with his human existence is that he not only raises the question of Being but also seeks to understand it.¹⁰²

Similarly, to Rudolf Bultmann's way of thinking, because the Gospel of life is implied in self understanding, the Gospel of life is presupposed in man's pre-understanding. As he declares, the Gospel "is understandable precisely because it is the Gospel of life".¹⁰³ Man can understand it because it speaks of man's existence. This compares in general with what Christian expositors

have driven home, mainly, that the Bible and the Gospel are grasped because they speak to man's real life.¹⁰⁴ The idea that man's most fundamental quest finds fulfillment in the Gospel finds its locus classicus in St. Augustine's prayer, "Our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee".¹⁰⁵

However, what seems to be unique about Rudolf Bultmann's viewpoint is that the Gospel of life which the human understanding grasps is portrayed in existential-ontological terms. Namely, the human understanding which grasps the Gospel of life must also be an existential-ontological understanding. In other words, man has the inherent ability to understand the existential-ontological proclamation because he already has an existential-ontological pre-understanding.

Does man in fact seek and hear the Gospel with this pre-understanding? Even if we assume its validity as a broad, naked assertion, we must consider its full-orbed meaning in the light of Rudolf Bultmann's enlarged already-discussed delineation of man's pre-understanding of revelation. Further, has Rudolf Bultmann's analysis grasped the reality which answers man's fundamental quest? The Gospel may be understandable because it is the Gospel of life, but by the same token, inauthentic existence is also understandable and also seems to speak to this life. How does man know that "authentic existence" is authentic and "inauthentic existence" is inauthentic? Consistent with the above, he would probably consider this an a priori.

An implication of Rudolf Bultmann's exposition is that the Gospel adds nothing new to the finite human equation; that is, it adds no new truth or communication or supernatural spiritual power which had been previously absent in man. Indeed, in answer to his rhetorical question about what revelation reveals he replies, "Nothing at all, so far as the question concerning revelation asks for doctrines ... or for mysteries that become known once and for all as soon as they are communicated...."¹⁰⁶ Is he espousing "humanism"? If so, what kind? The answer is difficult neatly to determine. If one narrowly

restricted "humanism" to mean the preoccupation with the interests and meaning of man to the exclusion of a personal, living, Being -- God -- who from a transcendent realm of reality perforates the visible world and transmits to man unique reality, then Rudolf Bultmann could be considered a "humanist". He does not accept as John Wesley that revelation is a disclosure of eternal truth from a supernatural realm. However, if one looks broadly at the concept of God and understands "humanism" as an interest in man which disavows a god then Rudolf Bultmann would not, strictly speaking, be a humanist.¹⁰⁷

With this background, Rudolf Bultmann discloses New Testament "revelation" in its definitive conception. "Christ is revelation," he says.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, "the revelation in Christ is not the first" revelation,¹⁰⁹ but, as Paul expresses it, Jesus is the "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:21f) in whom the new aeon begins.¹¹⁰ In John's formulation, "Jesus is the krisis" who is sent as the revealer.¹¹¹ His coming is the turn of the age so that whoever believes in him passes from death to life.¹¹² Jesus emphasized that the fact of his person was decisive since he claimed to be "the bearer of the definitive word of God in the last hour".¹¹³

As has been already pointed out, when Rudolf Bultmann speaks of Jesus being "the word", he may equally interchange "definitive word" with "decisive event" or "saving act of God".¹¹⁴ This is a significant equation in his interpretation. From his study of John's teaching, he concludes that because the "doing of signs" (John 12:37; 20:30) and "miracles" is secondary in importance to Jesus' "words", his works (or work as a whole) are his words (John 5:36; 8:28, 14:10)¹¹⁵

In positing that "word" equals "work", Rudolf Bultmann claims he is harking back to the Old Testament conception of "word" which the New Testament now assumes.¹¹⁶ Firstly, he affirms that in the Old Testament "God speaks to man in the events of nature".¹¹⁷ Whether or not "the word of God" was viewed at one time as being audible, divine speech is uncertain.

Nevertheless, God's speaking eventually came to be conceived as God speaking through events in nature. Man mythologized events, understanding himself as being addressed by God. The manifestation was understood as God's word not in the sense that it communicated content, or eternal truth, or logical judgement, but in the fact that it was an event in time, a direct address, a word speaking to man.¹¹⁸ In the might of nature, man is not only told that he is a dependent creature but he lets it say something to him.¹¹⁹

Secondly, God's Word can also be thought of in the ordinary sense of a word spoken in human speech which gives authoritative direction to man (i.e. as the word of a prophet).¹²⁰

The common ground between these two meanings is this: God's word is present in the fact that "God's Word is always his sovereign command".¹²¹ Put another way, "God's Word is God in so far as he calls man into being, limits him, and enigmatically encompasses him".¹²²

The concept of "word" which Rudolf Bultmann utilizes here to build his case seems to draw upon the research of those who attempted to describe rather than explain the primitive religious consciousness of man. In his essay, "The Significance of Dialectical Theology For the Scientific Study of The New Testament" (1928), Rudolf Bultmann propounds that the concept of power, mana or orenda, is found in "primitive" religions.¹²³ This concept of "mana" was linked by the English anthropologist Robert Ranulph Marett to religious consciousness.¹²⁴ Coming from the Pacific regions, the word 'mana' represented a type of religious experience widespread among primitive peoples. Mana is "a force altogether distinct from physical power, which acts in all kinds of ways for good and evil".¹²⁵ This force is believed to be attached to a wide range of natural objects, even, for that matter, persons. Whatever possesses mana is tabu and is not to be approached lightly. Correspondingly, he determines that the mood of "awe" which has essential constituents is the fundamental religious feeling.¹²⁶

Rudolf Bultmann's description of the word of power as mana which speaks to man that he is limited and dependent also has the flavour of Schleiermacher's "feeling of absolute dependence" or Rudolph Otto's "numinous" experience in which one experiences "creature-feeling" -- the feeling of the nothingness of finite being".¹²⁷ Notwithstanding, Rudolf Bultmann takes issue with the concept of mana from the standpoint that it has been understood from a scientific viewpoint of nature rather than from the conception of existence.¹²⁸ He argues that while the concept of "mana" can be transmitted by science, it can be understood only according to the degree that the interpreter himself understands the eeriness of existence.¹²⁹ In a parallel fashion to the way in which the mood of Angst ("anxiety", "dread") in Martin Heidegger's existential-ontological analysis discloses the structure of man's existence, his limitation and finitude,¹³⁰ the "uncanniness" of the "mana"-laden Word of God is seen by Rudolf Bultmann to unveil man's finitude and limitation.

He argues that this concept of the occult-power-possessing word is not only influential in the Old Testament, but also in later Judaism and in Jesus. In later Judaism, the word of God is the law which is God's command confronting the community as a summons requiring obedience.¹³¹ Jesus remains within this Old Testament tradition in that His Word is also "summons", a call to decision.¹³²

Rudolf Bultmann determines that the Old Testament concept of the word of God is definitive for the New Testament with one exception. The New Testament does not speak of the word (except on occasion) as a force acting in natural events. Almost exclusively the word is described as being spoken in human speech to man.¹³³ How does one recognize the word of God from other words? It is differentiated from other words in that it does not originate in human considerations and human intentions. It is not distinguished by a psychic experience, or as stemming from a certain condition of the soul or from what appears to be a supernatural cause.¹³⁴ In fact, there is no way to

discover from the outside what in human speech is God's Word. "God's Word is always summons and is understood as God's Word only when the summons is understood and heard in the real sense of the word," says Rudolf Bultmann.¹³⁵

Therefore, it is in the light of the concept of "word" as power and word's synonymy with "act" that the communication of Jesus can best be grasped. Rudolf Bultmann states in the Gospel of John that Jesus' words are construed as words of life not because they communicate definable content, but because of whose words they are -- the words of God.¹³⁶ Jesus' words are only special in and by the act of being uttered. For this reason, his doing is speaking and his saying is doing. As manifested in John's Gospel, practically all the words of Jesus are assertions about himself and do not present christological information or teaching of a metaphysical quality about his person.¹³⁷ In the "It is I" expressions, which Rudolf Bultmann interprets to mean "all that I say is I", Jesus presents himself as "the one for whom the world is waiting".¹³⁸

Therefore, as the Revealer of God, Jesus "reveals nothing but that he is the Revealer". He brings in his person that for which man yearns: life and truth.¹³⁹ In Jesus Christ, one is called to understand oneself anew as limited and as judged and as given the gift of life through which death is overcome.

"Revelation consists in nothing other than the fact of Jesus Christ. His coming as such is designated as the revelation. Because he was sent, life was revealed...; he 'appeared'," says Rudolf Bultmann.¹⁴⁰ Death is the limit of man's existence. "Man rebels against death and knows that as one fallen under it he is not in his authenticity" states Rudolf Bultmann. Death concerns man and he knows he, from his own resources, cannot be lord over it. However, "revelation" is an occurrence that abolishes death. Jesus Christ is this specific occurrence.¹⁴¹

Having established that Jesus is the Revealer, Rudolf Bultmann poses the consequent, crucial question: How is Jesus the Revealer and how does he

bring life and truth? The answer comes: In no other way than that Jesus says that he is it and says that he brings it. John in his Gospel presents only the fact ("das Dass" -- literally, "the that") of the Revelation without describing its content ("ihr Was" -- literally, "its what") in a rational or speculative way.¹⁴² John may adopt the Gnostic mythology which speculates about cosmogony and soteriology, but the bare fact of the Revelation is the decisive thing.¹⁴³ "Revelation" is represented as the shattering and negating of all human self-assertion, norms, and evaluations.¹⁴⁴ Because of this very fact, the Revelation is the affirmation of the human longing for life, true reality.

This can be exemplified only by the faith that overcomes the "offense" of shattered rationality and subjects itself to the negation. The man called to have such faith can ask for no credentials, no legitimation, no "testimony" to the validity of the word. Because God testifies to Jesus through Jesus' works (which are identical to his words), the testimony is identical with that which is to be substantiated.

Therefore, Jesus cannot legitimate himself and cannot present a "testimony" in the sense demanded by the world. Espousing this in conformity with his philosophic pre-understanding, Rudolf Bultmann discerns that the word of Jesus does not find its substantiation by a backward movement from the attesting word to the thing attested. This would entail the thing itself being confirmable irrespective of the word. This cannot be. In contrast, however, he avows that the word of Jesus finds its substantiation only in a faith-prompted acceptance of the word. Only in faith is the attested matter seen and the witness recognized as genuine.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, the object of faith makes itself accessible to nothing but faith.¹⁴⁶

Rudolf Bultmann carries further this issue of how the historical fact, the event of Jesus Christ, is related to "summons". This also brings us back to the issue raised earlier of how Paul achieved a "resolve" to recognize Jesus as the Lord. Specifically, the issue involves how the event of the past is related

to the summons of the present moment.¹⁴⁷ It must be recounted that Jesus presented no teaching about his person but claimed to be the bearer of the definitive word of God in the last hour. It was not "what" he says but "that" he says it which puts all who hear him into a new and decisive situation. The primitive community by resolve saw in "Jesus the One to whom God had assigned the office of Messiah and the One who will come again to be the judge and to bring salvation".¹⁴⁸ The community proclaimed him as such and thereby confronted Paul with the question of whether or not he would acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. Paul testifies that Jesus was made known to him as the Messiah by "revelation" which means that he either had to acknowledge or reject him by the obedience of faith.¹⁴⁹ Acknowledging him, the primitive community and Paul viewed the historic person of Jesus as the decisive saving act of God. While the primitive community implicitly affirmed that the crucified Jesus was coming as the Messiah, Paul explicitly avowed that the new age had begun in the historic Jesus.¹⁵⁰

Rudolf Bultmann affirms that "a call to decision in the light of his person implies a christology". This christology is not theoretical speculation but can only be the interpretation of the answer given in the decision for him. As we will later discuss, ascriptions to the nature of the Messiah proceed from faith and are not properties that may be observed prior to faith.

Rudolf Bultmann submits that the primitive community's resolve to confess Jesus as Messiah shows that Jesus' word, that fact of his speaking and not its content, is understood as the decisive act of God.¹⁵¹ A crucial corner is turned at this juncture. The further transmission of Jesus' proclamation became not a simple reproduction of Jesus ideas, but "Christ the proclaimer had to become the proclaimed".¹⁵² Hence, this means that the proclamation of Christ itself became the summons, the question of whether or not one would affirm the historical, crucified Jesus as Messiah and the decisive saving act of God.¹⁵³ Thus, as Rudolf Bultmann confidently concludes, the "great enigma of New Testament theology", "how the proclaimer

became the proclaimed", is solved in the realization that what is decisive is "that he proclaimed".¹⁵⁴

Paul was asked whether he would acknowledge, in the ambiguous historical fact of the cross, the judgement of God upon man's prior self understanding as a historical fact.¹⁵⁵ On the one hand, the cross of Christ is an objective fact of the world perceived by observation. On the other hand, the saving act of God is a fact of salvation in the sense that it is not an objective fact in the world which can be perceived by observation.¹⁵⁶ That the word declares the cross to be the saving fact is the "folly" of the cross. The proclamation is not a mere factual communication given once and for all. It is preached continually again and again. "For in the communication of the fact of salvation there is a summons, a question to be decided, an invitation," says Rudolf Bultmann.¹⁵⁷ As Jesus' person and speaking, in virtue of the fact that they were proclamation, called the primitive community to decision, so now even the proclamation (the death and resurrection is the "saving act of God") calls persons in every "now" to decision. In other words, what Jesus himself and his proclamation was to the primitive community, the preaching is to persons in the here and now.

Moreover, since "the that", the "here and now", the factuality of Jesus' person constitutes the revelation, the kerygma is his that, his here and now which becomes contemporary in the address itself.¹⁵⁸ As Jesus did not proclaim historical teaching or information about himself, neither does the kerygma, the preaching. Further, Rudolf Bultmann warns us of the illegitimacy of trying to go behind the kerygma in an effort to reconstruct a "historical Jesus". The historical Jesus is not the Lord but Jesus Christ, the Christ preached, who is the Lord.¹⁵⁹

The Christ event is further consummated in the preaching of the Word. The apostle Paul's preaching of it is itself "event" and calls persons to a decision. In the apostle's preaching (2 Corinthians 5:20), Christ himself summons men. As Rudolf Bultmann concisely summarizes, "Christ becomes

contemporary in the preaching."¹⁶⁰ Therefore, Paul terms the preaching of the Gospel, just as he does the death and resurrection of Jesus, the "saving act of God".¹⁶¹ The eschatological now of the death and resurrection of Jesus is not a past instant in vanishing time but is the eschatological now, expressly by being always contemporary whenever the preaching trumpets.¹⁶² If the Christ event ends the old aeon and begins the new, so does Paul's preaching. For the "Word" proclaims that an act of God has already been done and is being done again now as the word is being spoken to us. As Rudolf Bultmann remarks, "That this word is said, the fact of the saying, makes the new age present We meet our present moment as those to whom forgiveness has already been accorded in the cross and resurrection."¹⁶³

Not mere communication of knowledge to which one may return, the occurrence of the proclamation as event is itself part of the revelation. In fact, the preaching apostle is part of the Gospel. "He actually speaks 'for Christ', so that God himself is 'appealing' through him."¹⁶⁴ Rudolf Bultmann writes that "revelation is effected precisely in the proclamation". It is addressed not to the interest or curiosity of others, but to their consciences. (2 Corinthians 4:2).¹⁶⁵ Because Paul preaches and it is in human words that the event occurs, Paul becomes Christ for his hearers.¹⁶⁶ Indeed, access to Jesus is only in the preaching.¹⁶⁷

"In the proclamation", explains Rudolf Bultmann, "Jesus is, so to speak, duplicated. He comes again, he is always coming again".¹⁶⁸

Let me pause to reflect briefly upon Rudolf Bultmann's formulation. The obvious question facing any Christian theology in the aftermath of Jesus' death is how and in what way the event is relevant to individuals in subsequent generations. Traditional, Christian teaching such as John Wesley's has affirmed from the New Testament onwards that the supernaturally, resurrected Jesus through the Holy Spirit continued in every new generation to live and work and bring to bear upon the life of every individual, believer the effects of His life, death, and resurrection.

For Rudolf Bultmann, such a metaphysical explanation is unacceptable and untenable in the modern world. Moreover, the salvation-occurrence can neither be present as a "reminiscent" historical account which acts upon us by "moving" us. Nor is it present "in the after-effect of a significant fact of world-history".¹⁶⁹ In addition to the conceptual framework and understanding already elucidated, Rudolf Bultmann assumes in arguing for the recurrence of the salvation-occurrence the modern, historical thought of such persons as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Dilthey, and Collingwood. Common among these is a rejection of the traditional Christian understanding of history as a linear progression of causes and effects marching toward the transcendent God's ultimate goal. More compatible with them is a concept of history which is relativistic and cyclical. By way of example, Nietzsche propounded the theory of "eternal recurrence" in which he held that all events eternally recur.¹⁷⁰ Also, Martin Heidegger set down the idea of "repetition" (wiederholbar) in which he held that one goes back into the past in such a manner as to regain the possibility which it contains making this possibility present in one's own existence today.¹⁷¹ Likewise, Rudolf Bultmann argues that the salvation-occurrence may recur in the individual's life today just as it occurred in Paul's. He assumes "the that" becomes contemporary, it is duplicated, whenever the proclamation is preached. The individual today may allow the preaching to become for him a challenge in every "now" to accept the crucified Jesus as the Messiah just as Paul. Indeed, the "that" of Christ, "revelation" will once again be disclosed when the contemporary individual submits himself to the proclamation.

One appreciates Rudolf Bultmann's desire to argue that there is continuity in human experience from generation to generation and era to era. Even though we are of different eras with different world-views, we share a common humanness which transcends these and remains ever relevant and able to be recaptured. Rudolf Bultmann, as the "historical school", achieves his conclusions by assuming that history is without ultimate goal, purpose,

universal value, or eternal meaning. However, Rudolf Bultmann assumes that in every age to every hearer the proclamation is "summons" which reveals to everyone who submits to it a new self-understanding and the knowledge that Jesus is God's saving Word. Does not he assume that the proclamation has a constant meaning or effect? What guarantees that every or any hearer in every generation will understand the proclamation as Rudolf Bultmann describes it? In addition, how do we understand Christian experience and testimony prior to Rudolf Bultmann?

True to his anthropological approach, Rudolf Bultmann seems to invert the guardian of meaning when he wrenches its hold from the transcendent, personal Being God and gives it to constant, human existence. John Wesley assumed that Jesus' death and resurrection appearance were objective, historical events which were filled with objective meaning such that concomitant with the events an actual change in status between God and humankind occurred (distinct from man's response) once and for all. Of course, such an idea is ostensibly alien to Rudolf Bultmann's premises and he would deny it as metaphysical speculation which man cannot validate. While Rudolf Bultmann accepts that Jesus' death on Golgotha was an objective, historical event, he denies that it carries objective, eternal meaning for and effect on the cosmos and humankind in general. He does argue that it has a constantly repeating, subjective effect (to which classical Christian thought would also agree). In any regards, given the choice, Rudolf Bultmann is more ready to venture that the trustee of meaning is Dasein rather than a personal, transcendent, Deity.

In rounding out the discussion of Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of grace, expressly Jesus Christ as the saving act of God (the salvation-occurrence), we draw attention to the issue of how the New Testament christological affirmations relate to the proclamation. We may begin by saying that Rudolf Bultmann readily assures us that statements about Christ's pre-existence and incarnation are neither to be seen as "speculative theory about

a divine being" nor as cosmological mythology which does not have the character of direct challenge.¹⁷² The New Testament knows nothing of a Jesus viewed as an object or world phenomenon among other objects of the world who may be explained, e.g., in terms of human development and personality. The historical Jesus does not make any demand on us.¹⁷³

Rudolf Bultmann's thesis refers back to his philosophic pre-understanding which underlies his criticism of former historical research of the New Testament. According to his appraisal, when it studied Christ it made the unconscious assumption that the New Testament shared its philosophy.¹⁷⁴ The New Testament's statements about Christ were accepted as statements about a world phenomenon whose nature could be correctly described. In other words, modern research measured the New Testament by a modern scientific Weltanschauung. Consequently, the New Testament's teaching appeared to historical research to consist of borrowed mythologies which were applied to the concrete, historical figure Jesus.¹⁷⁵ Demonstrating the presupposition of Feuerbach's analysis, Rudolf Bultmann argues the historical figure Jesus became the occasion for believing the "old wishes" and "hopes" to be reality. These "fantastic dreams" were superimposed upon him in the form of the mythologies. Consequently, his individual features were almost completely concealed and christology was turned into mythology.¹⁷⁶

Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann asserts that New Testament statements about Jesus are not to be taken as ascriptions of his nature (mythological or otherwise) in the mode of a neutral observer. Consequently, he affirms that the historical Jesus of the synoptics does not summon us to "believe in" his person.¹⁷⁷

Trying to read the New Testament christological affirmations as statements of the objective, manifest nature of the historical figure Jesus is to perceive "Christ after the flesh". For this offense, "liberalism" as well as "rationalism" and "pietism" may be tried and convicted by him.¹⁷⁸ Rudolf Bultmann confesses point-blank that "it is impossible to see what more was done by the

historical Jesus who goes to his death in obedient love than was done by all those who, for example, in the World War took the same road, also in obedient love".¹⁷⁹ He pungently adds, "I have done him no wrong and he has nothing to forgive me".¹⁸⁰ Indeed, according to him, "Christ after the flesh" is no concern of ours.¹⁸¹

After having argued negatively that from a scientific world-view the christological New Testament sayings are mythological and are not to be examined as propositions regarding the historical Jesus' objective nature, Rudolf Bultmann sets down positively the manner in which they are to be beheld. Though historical research's study of Jesus failed, nonetheless, he finds that this research reopened the christological road from "teaching about Christ" to "faith in Christ".¹⁸²

For the first time, the real significance of the teaching about Jesus is shown to be not in the mythological content of the statements but in the multiple expressions as one conviction of faith.¹⁸³ More particularly, christology is the expression of a new self-understanding.

Let us follow Rudolf Bultmann's analysis of the emergence of this new discovery. He seeks to carry forward what he deemed as the praiseworthy work of Johannes Weiss and Wilhelm Bousset. While recognizing the great merit of Wilhelm Bousset's conclusion, he corrects Wilhelm Bousset by positing that christology is not "simply the expression of the cultic piety" of Hellenistic Christianity.¹⁸⁴ Rather, christology is "proclamation" or "summons".¹⁸⁵ Rudolf Bultmann claims, "Jesus presented no teaching about his person" but rather stressed that "the fact of his person" was decisive since he was "the bearer of the definitive word of God".¹⁸⁶ This call to decision, to acknowledge him, implies a christology and not theoretical speculation. The christology which was implicit in Jesus became explicit in the primitive community in that christology "can only be the interpretation of the answer given in the decision for him"¹⁸⁷

As far as it goes, Paul's christology (basically John's as well) was the verbal response of his new self-understanding.¹⁸⁸ As for faith, the response to the summons is given expression in words, "the verbal response is christology".¹⁸⁹ Said another way, Pauline christology is nothing "other than the proclamation of the saving act of God which took place in Christ". Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann discerns that the incarnation of the pre-existent Son has a "cosmic" dimension; that is, a "historic (geschichtliche) dimension".¹⁹⁰ In other words, the incarnation has an existential dimension. It is encountered in the Christian proclamation. The existence of a proclamation from God is expressed mythologically in what is said of the pre-existent Christ. What the hearer affirms when he believes the pre-existent Christ is not facts about the historical Jesus, but that he has been encountered by the word of God.¹⁹¹

Rudolf Bultmann's guide for evaluating Paul's christological statements is found in two, closely interwoven conclusions: one, christology is the proclamation of the Christ event as direct summons; two, it is likewise theological explanation of the new self-understanding of the believer as indirect summons. Regarding the latter, Paul's historical situation demanded a "critical-polemic" explanation using contemporary mythological conceptions which were meaningful to his particular generation.¹⁹² Because the conceptions change over time, he asserts that Paul must be critically examined at this point. In any case, all the images say one thing: the historical fact of the cross is God's saving act.¹⁹³

TWO FAITHS

Implicit in the discussion of Jesus Christ's relation to the proclamation, another issue for investigation and evaluation considers whether a hearer must respond to the salvation-occurrence with two acts of faith. Must the hearer of the proclamation have both (1) a conviction that Jesus Christ is by nature the pre-existent Son of God who became man, died, and was raised,

and (2) a belief in the saving significance of these events? Rudolf Bultmann avers that if one takes Paul's statements literally on face value, then not only "two acts of faith" but also "two concepts of belief" must be differentiated.¹⁹⁴ The first conception of belief means the "willingness to consider true (believe) the facts reported of the pre-existent Son of God -- incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection from the dead -- and to see in them a demonstration of the grace of God".¹⁹⁵ In defining the second type of faith he states, "The second is a faith which is self-surrender to the grace of God and which signifies the utter reversal of a man's previous understanding of himself" He maintains that for the concept of faith-belief to be homogeneous and the decisive act of faith-belief to be one, the decision-question of whether or not a man gives up his old self-understanding and understands himself from the grace of God must be one and the same question as the question of whether or not he will acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Lord. To Rudolf Bultmann's mind, this is exactly Paul's intention.¹⁹⁶

Rudolf Bultmann's method follows Kierkegaard's regarding how the act of faith is connected with its object. Kierkegaard reversed the traditional Roman Catholic order (which John Wesley essentially accepted, though with some flexibility and with his own qualifications) of the two types of faith. Roman Catholicism had held that unformed faith (fides informis), the prior "faith" which accepts prescribed doctrines, becomes true faith when love (*caritas*) is subsequently added to the equation.¹⁹⁷ Thus, the interior aspect of faith succeeded the intellectual assent to the content of faith. In contradistinction, Kierkegaard urged that the "how" (the qua -- the interiority of faith, the decision to believe) comes prior to the "what" (the quae -- the content of faith).¹⁹⁸ Indeed, he argued that the certainty of objective, historical statements regarding Jesus could never be so sure as to provide a basis for belief in him.¹⁹⁹ Only faith, which originates from the inner self, can attain the object.²⁰⁰

While Rudolf Bultmann is to be distinguished from Kierkegaard in that Rudolf Bultmann has formed a definite and certain understanding of the nature of the christological statements, nevertheless, he definitely concurs that the evidence that Jesus Christ is the pre-existent Son of God and resurrected Lord can be visible only to those who have faith.²⁰¹ That God's revelation is in Jesus Christ cannot be demonstrated to the neutral observer.²⁰² Neither can Christ be recognized in his divine quality in order to progress to faith.²⁰³ To try to do so is to try to remove the very stumbling block of the Gospel that confronts natural man. The very question before man is: Will he believe that God's forgiving grace is in this human figure Jesus?²⁰⁴ Will he accept in faith that the crucified Jesus is the Messiah? Without the offense, there is no revelation.²⁰⁵ It is through the judgement of the cross, the "stumbling block", that human pride -- human "wisdom", human ideals, and Weltanschauunge -- is broken.²⁰⁶

How the Church in the Easter faith surmounted the cross's scandal is unimportant to Rudolf Bultmann.²⁰⁷ To try to go back behind the belief and discover the resurrection of Jesus as a historical objective event or to search behind the kerygma to reconstruct a historical Jesus is to ruin the paradox of "the Word was flesh".²⁰⁸ It is not the historical Jesus who is the Lord, but it is Jesus Christ, the Christ preached who is the Lord.²⁰⁹

Furthermore, Rudolf Bultmann buttresses himself against the challenge for prior evidence that the man Jesus is the Messiah and risen Christ by saying that the very counter-question already demonstrates a rejection of the proclamation. To question the proclaimer's right to its claim means that the claim is already rejected.²¹⁰ To consider answering the question "Why this specific man?" is to elicit Rudolf Bultmann's thunderous warning: "That is a question that must not, may not, be answered -- for to do so would destroy the offense which belongs ineradicably to the Revelation."²¹¹

Rudolf Bultmann's concern over the "two acts of faith" is this: Are Protestants consistent in claiming that man is saved alone by faith (sola fide)

which trusts in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ while also holding that assent to certain truths (e.g. Jesus' Deity) is necessary? If faith alone is necessary for salvation, how can anything else be required of man? His critical engagement with this issue is contested on two flanks: (1) If a confession of doctrinal truth is required prior to faith, has not then a work of man been made necessary for salvation? (2) Is not mere assent to correct doctrines the prescription for an impersonal, stultifying, rational orthodoxy? He shared this concern with his Marburg teacher Wilhelm Herrmann who protested against this emphasis in the German Protestant Church.²¹² In keeping with Martin Luther's reaction to the Roman Catholic insistence that formal confession was the way to salvation, Rudolf Bultmann assumes Wilhelm Herrmann's point that Martin Luther "would not allow that a 'work' of reasoned and determined assent to doctrines and narratives is real faith".²¹³ Moreover, Rudolf Bultmann is likely uneasy about the intellectual suffocation and opprobrium that he believes an uncritical acceptance of questionable doctrines forces upon thinking Christians in the contemporary age.

Rudolf Bultmann's heedful attention is rightfully directed to these matters. It may very well be that no answer is entirely adequate to resolve the issue. Protestants in the spirit of the Reformation would be sympathetic to his desire to insure that faith alone and not "works" is the condition for salvation. John Wesley shares his concern for avoiding a Christian faith that is reduced to a rational affirmation of propositions. Moreover, there is hopefully a widespread desire for intellectual integrity.

Of course, central to the controversy is how faith (and works) is defined. It may be argued in compliance with Rudolf Bultmann that, indeed, neither the knowledge (notitia) of propositional affirmations regarding the nature of Jesus' person nor the mental agreement (assensus) to them saves.²¹⁴ However, while both Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley agree at this point, it is also precisely here that they disagree. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the above proposition can be valid only if one does not view literally the New

Testament affirmations of Jesus. John Wesley and those of the classical, theological position would hold that the christological affirmations and Jesus' nature are correlative. Albeit agreement to them does not save, agreement is, nonetheless, a necessary condition.

As has been observed, one of the interests of Protestants is to protect the notion of sola fide. While Protestants agree on this, they are at odds with each other as to what constitutes a "work". Protestants would seem to be agreed with Wilhelm Herrmann that notitia, knowledge, "is certainly a necessary condition for faith".²¹⁵ One might fairly say this knowledge which both he and Rudolf Bultmann accept is the hearing of the fact of the Christian faith.²¹⁶

However, the subject of assensus scatters opinion. Rudolf Bultmann, also, Wilhelm Herrmann, insists on by-passing assensus because required confession of doctrine previous to fiducia is defined by him as a human effort. In considering their point, the nature of "confession" must be distinguished. Does "confession" mean that one views this assent to doctrine as containing the salvic power of salvation? Or, is it the acknowledgement of the fact which is only the condition that puts them in the range of the fiducia (faith) which saves? Moreover, the distinction between assenting to doctrine and to the "facts" of Scripture must be made. However, then the argument centers upon what is not only to be considered doctrine and teaching as opposed to historical and Scriptural "fact" but also the nature of each.

Indeed, the description of the nature of a "work" can become contrived. If "work" is defined so narrowly as to include any involvement of a person, then the inner action of perception, thought, or will, or any outward bodily action involves the person "doing something". A person could be saved only without his free will. This suits neither Rudolf Bultmann nor John Wesley. Should we press Paul further than he intends to go? In Paul's description of "works", it is doubtful that he had in mind that a mental affirmation to the literally pre-existent Jesus' death and resurrection for salvation was a boast of self

confidence.

Rudolf Bultmann and Wilhelm Herrmann tend to stereotype any persons who speak of the acceptance of christological affirmations as a condition of faith according to the Roman Catholic teaching of assensus. The assent to scriptural, christological statements may be distinguished from a recital of all the church's credal affirmations. Indeed, Rudolf Bultmann, just as John Wesley, does recognize the useful contradistinction between the doctrines and teachings of the church and the "fact(s)" of Scriptural assertion.

However, the definition and nature of these "facts" would be debated. A further distinction may be made between "facts" of Scripture in general and the "facts" immediately relevant as conditional to the realization of saving faith. That is, it may be that certain, essential christological attributes of Jesus Christ taken together form the immediate object of faith. To winnow the christological affirmations from "the facts" that "he lived and died" may be substituting one object of faith for a different one. Rudolf Bultmann would not likely accept this for he would not accept that sifting the christological baggage from "the facts" has altered the object of faith. His assumption is that the christological statements have no objective correlation in historical reality to the historical man Jesus. Therefore, their presence or absence does not alter the object of faith. In contrast, one like John Wesley who assumes that the christological affirmations are indigenous to Jesus' nature would maintain that their absence significantly alters the object of faith.²¹⁷

Rudolf Bultmann by dropping any concept of "assensus" prior to faith goes beyond Martin Luther, historic Protestantism, and John Wesley. There is agreement between Rudolf Bultmann and Martin Luther in the assertion that one must find redemption in Jesus before truly understanding him. Notwithstanding this, Martin Luther is distinguished from Rudolf Bultmann in that, for Martin Luther, finding redemption leads the believer into the true knowledge of the literal Deity of Jesus Christ as the eternal, transcendent God. For Rudolf Bultmann, finding redemption leads to no such thing.

Redemption results in an affirmation which only expresses one's self understanding, not an objective, transcendent reality. Presumably, Martin Luther would hold if "the believer" did not come to acknowledge Jesus as literal God, then his redemption would not be authentic. By severing "Jesus" from the ascriptions regarding him, Rudolf Bultmann's faith lacks a commanding and convincing locus which keeps Christian faith moored and tethered.

Though Wilhelm Herrmann admits Martin Luther still clings to the idea of assensus (albeit modified), Rudolf Bultmann's design is to make a case for a Christian faith which may circumvent the whirlpool issue of the historical Jesus.²¹⁸ Inasmuch as the traditional ascriptions of the person of Jesus are made part and parcel with accepting Him as the crucified and risen Messiah, Rudolf Bultmann would consider Christian faith not possible. According to him, we shall never know what to believe about Jesus because his person is so veiled in ambiguity and mystery.

Nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann's proposal does not appear to eliminate, ameliorate, or overcome the ambiguity. The objectively ambiguous person Jesus remains just as objectively ambiguous after faith as before faith. No amount of post-faith appended, mythological accretions can change this. At some point in time before, during, or after faith and in harmony with proper Christian faith, a believer must be allowed sober, rational reflection upon the proposition: a person makes a life-changing decision involving a radically new self-understanding on the sole basis of a historically remote man about whom extremely little of any material importance is known. Rather than Rudolf Bultmann's faith proposal really overcoming the ambiguity of Jesus has it not remained moored to it? The ambiguity remains: Why this man? Why does this particular person Jesus become "the that"? What makes the preaching of Jesus' death as the saving act of God become in turn "the that"? Why we should be compelled to accept that the word of God was revealed in Jesus in any way differently from any other person is ambiguous. Why should we

consider that our self-understanding is tied to the death of this man and not to the death of another messiah such as Theudas (Acts 5:36)? If Rudolf Bultmann accepts that not knowing what to believe about Jesus because of his ambiguity is enough to thwart traditional faith in the traditional Jesus, then of what advantage is his proposal which remains ambiguous?

Has Rudolf Bultmann's formulations made the salvation-occurrence and the Christian faith less absurd than traditional formulations? Though not his desire, nonetheless, does he not end up unintentionally ridiculing faith in the salvation-occurrence by making it such a farcical proposal? Can it really be maintained that the decision of faith called for by him is any less a sacrificium intellectus than, say, the consideration that the New Testament testifies that Jesus' bodily resurrection appearance was as an objective event?²¹⁹

Rudolf Bultmann argues that to insist on objective teachings which attempt to demonstrate Jesus' person is to rob the cross of its "scandal". From another perspective, these ascriptions which attempt to set forth Jesus only heighten and fully define the "scandal". The assertions that the eternal, supernatural God has become man, was crucified, and literally rose from the dead certainly do not make faith easier! As some may argue, it is only upon this basis that Christian faith is properly exercised. Moreover, may it be precisely because such a faith is so scandalous that Rudolf Bultmann has embarked upon a new theological interpretation?

SUMMARY

To summarize, grace like righteousness is not a quality of God's, such as timeless kindness, but is an "occurrence". In a dialectical, theological fashion, Rudolf Bultmann proposes that grace is apprehended from the contrasting perspective of God's judgement. While indebted to Martin Luther's form of arguing that grace is veiled in its opposite, Rudolf Bultmann departed from him by conceiving that grace was a new understanding which arises

from out of human existence rather than that which is given to man by the transcendent God. Satisfied with main conclusions regarding the New Testament term "grace", Rudolf Bultmann's overriding interest is to demonstrate that grace is fundamentally God's eschatological deed, the salvation-occurrence, Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. He accords with classical Christian interpretations in focusing grace in the specific act of Christ while differing from them in denying its validity as a general category or description of a transcendent, personal God's character.

The quest central to Rudolf Bultmann's investigation of the salvation-occurrence is how the salvation-occurrence can be recognized and experienced by man as the "deed of grace". Because it has no objective meaning in and of itself, the historical event of Jesus' death is the "deed of grace" only when it is so recognized. Rudolf Bultmann's illumination of the thought-complexes which Paul harnesses to explain the significance of the event leads us toward the unfolding of his answer.

Several figures appear in Paul's writings but are dwarfed by the importance that Paul accords to the figures of the mystery religion divinity and the Gnostic myth. Drawing upon Wilhelm Bousset's research, Rudolf Bultmann claims Paul alloyed the idea of initiates sharing in the fate of the mystery religion's divinity with the humiliation and exaltation of the Gnostic "Redeemer myth". This was done in order to portray that the Christian believer may likewise share in the freedom from the powers achieved by the salvation-occurrence. While Rudolf Bultmann deems it irrelevant, to the critic the question as to why Paul in the first place should desire to link Jesus' common death to the individual's personal experience is irrepressible.

The comparison of the "Redeemer-myths" with the New Testament proclamation show, rather than tight correlation, significant disparity in form, content and motif. Moreover, a favourable comparison depends upon the construction one puts upon the highly figurative myths as well as upon the New Testament. The question as to why the ordinary, historical Jesus of

Nazareth elicited such bombastic language regarding himself and why it was determined he should be construed in terms of mythology remains unsatisfactorily explained.

Rudolf Bultmann straight forwardly asserts that Paul acquired by "revelation" the knowledge he needed to confess Jesus. En route to this understanding of "revelation", he unveils the presence of a prior pre-understanding of "revelation" which he describes in phenomenological, Heideggerian terms as an "opening-up" of ourselves. This pre-understanding indicates we already have some understanding of the New Testament idea of "revelation" by having a "not knowing knowledge" in which we realize that we are "limited" by death. We pointed out that this argument assumes: (1) that the natural man already has familiarity with the content of the New Testament (2) that the content of the New Testament term "revelation" is completely continuous with the term's content in a non-Christian setting. Further, one may doubt Rudolf Bultmann's account lives up to its own exhortation to "put in question" one's pre-understanding by not really allowing the existential-ontological pre-understanding to be "put in question" by the New Testament. While the existential approach to "revelation" finds the speck in the eye of "old-style" Christian metaphysics and would chastise it for holding that eternal death is the ultimate limit on man, it does not acknowledge the particle in its own eye when, as though it also had news from the other side of the grave, it asserts that human death is the final limit on man.

For Rudolf Bultmann, "revelation" in the New Testament is an "event", an "occurrence". It is not a communication of knowledge which could be known from the perspective of the subject-object relationship but is an eschatological event which happens to man in the present of which he can become aware. As Christians all along have maintained, the Gospel of life as revelation can be understood because the Gospel is presupposed in man's understanding. However, for Rudolf Bultmann this means that man has the inherent ability

to understand the existential-ontological proclamation because he already has an existential-ontological pre-understanding. Because he disavows any introduction from the "outside" of a new communication or transcendent, preternatural power which bestows the new understanding, he seems to open himself to the charge of Pelagianism.

The definitive revelation is Jesus Christ, the "Word". Harking back to the Old Testament and the concept of mana, Jesus' word in the New Testament is perceived in accordance with primitive religious consciousness as possessing a power which discloses man's finitude and limitations and confronts him as "summons" to accept Jesus as the Lord who unveils to man a new, self-understanding.

How does Jesus the Revealer bring life and truth? In no other way than that he says that he does. Jesus does not try to authenticate himself but is only substantiated in a faith-prompted acceptance of his word. He does not offer "what" -- discursive teaching -- but only "that" he is God's word. Because his proclamation is only "that", it is something that can only be accepted or rejected, but not examined.

Christology developed in the church's response to its acceptance of Jesus' summons. Likewise, in the manner of Jesus, it proclaimed a christology which did not stress content but only the fact "that" Jesus proclaimed he was the saving act of God. This "that" which once confronted Paul, also confronts others contemporaneously in the preaching. For in the preaching, Jesus is "duplicated" and Christ becomes contemporary. In fact, it is true to say that Paul, any preacher for that matter, becomes Christ for his hearers in a way that the "that" once again summons the hearer. Hence, the truth in the humorous quip that "when Bultmann enters the pulpit, God speaks".

Rudolf Bultmann may be recognized as arguing what traditional, Christian teaching has all along espoused; namely, that the salvation event may become contemporary in the present. The contradistinction between he and the Christian past is that he argues from a historically relativistic and cyclical

perspective which, nevertheless, assumes that human experience and understanding are constant and perpetual. While previous Christian thought, both liberal and conservative, presumes that Christian experience is perpetual, conservative thought does so only in connection with the assumption that a supernatural God who is both transcendent and immanent continues to reveal Himself in human experience. At bottom, Rudolf Bultmann would rather entrust the perpetuity of meaning to human understanding than to a personal, supernatural God.

In determining how the christological affirmations of Jesus relate to the proclamation, Rudolf Bultmann ascertains that christology is not to be interpreted as a description of the objective nature of a divine being or, similarly, in the manner of modern critical research, as mythologies applied to the historical Jesus which likewise speak of his nature.

From out of the ashes of destructive modern research, Rudolf Bultmann arrives at his understanding of christology as the expression of a new self-understanding. More specifically, Paul's (and John's) christology was the verbal response of a new self understanding which had resulted from their decision for Christ. Indeed, mythological constructs were used but only to communicate one thing: that the historical fact of the cross is God's saving act.

In the manner of Martin Luther and particularly Søren Kierkegaard, Rudolf Bultmann reversed the accustomed Roman Catholic order of faith by asserting that the "willingness to consider true" follows upon the heels of prior self surrender. To proceed otherwise is to destroy the "stumbling block" of the cross and automatically repudiate the claim.

Fiducia's precedence over assensus is promoted as avoiding the jeopardizing of the tenet of sola fide, as prohibiting a static doctrinal confessionalism, and as a guard against intellectual suffocation. Rudolf Bultmann interprets required assent to ascriptions to Jesus prior to faith (except the ascription that Jesus "lived and died") as demanding human effort

and, therefore, as a form of "works righteousness". John Wesley and classical Protestants would view the acceptance of the Scriptural, christological ascriptions, including his death, as the necessary groundwork and condition for the faith which saves. If the ascriptions are, as Rudolf Bultmann suggests, expressions of faith not correlative to the historical Jesus, then one may appreciate his contention that the necessary acceptance of these are of the nature of a "work". However, if, as John Wesley assumed, the ascriptions are to be taken together as integral correlatives of the object of faith, then assumed acceptance of them does not conflict but allows sola fide.

While Rudolf Bultmann's proposed understanding of the salvation-occurrence aims at providing an object of faith which has by-passed the "ambiguity" about Jesus' person, nevertheless, it remains enshrouded in the ambiguity of why and upon what rational basis the saving Word of God and recurring new, self-understanding should be linked with this man's death and its proclamation.

Mindful of this, there is irony in the fact that Rudolf Bultmann's project seeks to remove intellectual leprosy from the Christian Gospel all the while maintaining that self-surrender and radical authentic self-understanding are necessarily connected to the death of a historically, remote man about whom very little of any material importance is really known and about whom the question "Why this specific man?" is forbidden to be answered.

1. This is his procedure in his Theology of the New Testament.
2. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 194.
3. Ibid., pp. 194f.
4. Ibid., pp. 195f.
5. Ibid. Jesus did demand faith in his word and like any prophet expected to be believed as one sent by God. Nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann is quick to point out that this does not imply that Jesus demands faith in his own person.
6. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 289.
7. Ibid.
8. In other words, the occurrence of Christ's obedience can be regarded as the "deed of grace". This occurrence, his "act of righteousness", is displayed in contrast to Adam's trespass and disobedience (Romans 5:15-21).
9. The phrase "free gift (τὸ χάρισμα) ... in Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:15) can also be equated with the "grace of God".
10. Paul may identify grace as a personified power working against the power of sin because "the deed" is the decisive eschatological event in which the time of salvation ("the acceptable time") has dawned (2 Corinthians 6:1). Similarly, the meaning of "grace" approaches actual identity with that of "spirit". For this reason, the new situation into which the men of faith (those who have received the Spirit) are placed may also be referred to as "grace". In this case, "grace" denotes "the territory of the divine deed's sway"; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 156, 290.
11. Paul's apostolic office was conferred on him as a gift and is called a "grace" (Romans 1:5). Every manifestation of Christian living (notably, the exercise of the obligation to love) is a "gift" of God, a grace. Special gifts bestowed on persons are called charismata (Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 7:7). This charis (contained in both the word and idea) is confirmed by its synonymity with pneumatika (spiritual gifts) and means the mighty working of God. Moreover, that God's "grace" is a power that determines the life of the individual is demonstrated by 1 Corinthians 15:10 and 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ibid., pp. 156, 291.
12. Ibid., pp. 291f.
13. Ibid., p. 292.
14. Nonetheless, "grace" does mean the saving grace manifested in Christ (Titus 2:11). The Christian message is called "the Word" of "grace", while the Christian is said to be under "present grace". Also, "grace" appears to be conceived as a power which aids one in achieving a proper Christian attitude. Rudolf Bultmann remarks that it is difficult to say how "grace" and the "Spirit" determine Christian existence when they are not grasped in Paul's sense; yet, it seems they do manifest themselves in Christian conduct. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, pp. 210f.

15. Rudolf Bultmann's presentation implies a certain impatience with the methodical, thorough-going, text by text, systematic discussion of the word such as Hans Conzelmann's study of Χάρις in Gerhard Kittel's Wörterbuch. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, trans. and ed., Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1979), s.v. "Χάρις" by Hans Conzelmann.

He is more content in simply providing terse descriptions and general conclusions. For instance, as far as this student has determined, Rudolf Bultmann leaves out of his Theology of the New Testament any discussion of the appearance of Χάρις and χαρίζομαι in Luke's Gospel.

16. Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology, ed. Karl Rahner, et al., 6 vols. (London: Burns and Oates, 1968), s.v. "Grace: Biblical" by Klaus Berger, vol. 2, pp. 410-12; Conzelmann follows Bultmann; Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. "Χάρις", by Conzelmann; Luther, Romans, p. 174.
17. Martin Luther and John Calvin state that grace is God's unearned and undeserved generosity and mercy, the good will of God. Luther, Romans, p. 174; John Calvin, Calvin: Institutes of The Christian Religion, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, The Library of Christian Classics, vols. 20, 21, John Baillie, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. Van Dusen, gen. eds., vol. 20, book III, chpt. II, para. I, p. 725; book III, chpt. XIV, para. V, p. 771.

Other commentators similarly express grace as God's "unearned favor". Hans Küng, Justification, p. 197.; Sacramentum, s.v. "Grace: Systematic" by Karl Rahner, vol. 2, p. 416; Snaith, Old Testament, p. 176.; The Rev. William Sanday and The Rev. Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 4th ed., The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, The Rev. Samuel Rolles Driver, The Rev. Alfred Plummer, and The Rev. Charles Augustus Briggs, eds. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900), pp. 10, 138.; C.K. Barrett, A Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1957), p. 76.

Others speak of grace as God's self-communication and the giving of himself to establish a supernatural relationship with man. A New Dictionary of Christian Theology, ed. Alan Richardson and John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1983), s.v. "Grace" by E. J. Yarnold, pp. 244f; Rahner, Sacramentum, vol. 2, pp. 416, 418.

18. In Rudolf Bultmann's stress on grace as a "deed", an "act", he counters the typically Roman Catholic teaching that grace is a physical entity, a habitus, a new quality infused into the human subject. Küng, Justification, p. 197; W. T. Whitley, ed., The Doctrine of Grace, with an intro. by The Archbishop of York (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1932), pp. 152-54.

Hans Conzelmann advances a position similar to Rudolf Bultmann's when he explicitly states that Paul orientates himself, not to the question of God's nature, but to the historical manifestation of salvation in Christ. So, accordingly, Paul does not speak of a gracious God, but of grace actualized in the cross of Christ. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. "Χάρις", by Conzelmann, p. 394.

19. Sacramentum, s.v. "Grace" by Klaus Berger, vol. 2, p. 411; Küng, Justification, p. 198; Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Grace" by Yarnold p. 245.
20. Althaus, Martin Luther, pp. 235f; Küng, Justification, p. 200; Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Grace" by Yarnold, p. 245.
21. Bultmann designates grace as a "personified power" as well as that which means the mighty working of God. Klaus Berger sees it as a force given by God and illuminated in its association with "signs". Sacramentum, s.v. "Grace" by Berger, vol. 2, p. 410. The Roman Catholic and classical Protestant understanding of grace suggests grace as God's supernatural activity and influence in and upon man. Küng, Justification, p. 200; Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Grace" by Yarnold, pp. 244-45; Calvin, Institutes, vol. 20, book II, chpt. V, paras VII and XV, pp. 324, 334; book II, chpt. II, para. XII, p. 270. Karl Barth acknowledges that grace is the Power of God, but this is mainly interpreted as what it is not - no spiritual power in man; no physical energy in Nature; no cosmic power in this earth. The mark of it is the passing of this world. Barth, Romans, p. 103.
22. Küng, Justification, p. 197; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 11.
23. He does highlight the close affinity between Χάρις and ἀγάπη but with a different emphasis from that historically associated with Duns Scotus. Sacramentum, s.v. "Grace: History of Doctrine" by Johann Auer, vol. 2, p. 414; Whitley, ed., Grace, p. 152.
24. Heinz Zahrnt, The Question of God: Protestant Theology in the Twentieth Century, trans. R. A. Wilson (London: Collins, 1969) pp. 42-44.
25. Althaus, Martin Luther, pp. 30, 278-79.
26. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 292f.
27. Ibid., p. 294.
28. Whitley, ed., Grace, p. 200.
29. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 30.
30. This idea is implied in the discussion of Luther's concept of grace. Whitley, ed., Grace, pp. 200f.
31. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 294f.
32. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 295. He states that other passages such as Romans 5:9, I Corinthians 15:3; and II Corinthians 5:14 denote the propitiatory idea which also governs the liturgy of the Lord's Supper.
33. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 46f; 83-85, 296. Because Bultmann excludes Ephesians and Colossians from his Pauline purview, he discards four other instances (Ephesians 1:7, 2:3, Colossians 1:14, 20) which traditionally are included in the consideration. Moreover, whereas Bultmann interprets the term "the blood" to be distinct in Paul from the term "the cross", one comparison in Ephesians 1:7 and 2:13 with 2:16 demonstrates that

"the blood of Christ" in Paul may be synonymous with "the cross" and likewise associated with "the forgiveness of our trespasses".

34. He says if it meant he took the place of all, it would be rendered "one died in the place of all, therefore all have (vicariously) died". In verse 15, the ὕπέρ in "he died ὕπέρ all" means "for the sake of" and contains the propitiatory idea, Ibid., p. 296.

He also affirms that the description of his death as taking place "for us" appears in the Hellenistic Church as well as in the New Testament at large, Ibid., p. 84.

35. He concludes that this is confirmed by the statements in I Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 that "you were bought with a price". While his point seems well taken, the passage with which he attempts to justify his finding seems outside his concern. He seems to ignore the fact that Paul's purpose in this latter passage is to give advice regarding one's station in life, most particularly to those who inhabit the literal, societal position (κλητός) of "slave". William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, A translation and adaptation of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur, 4th revised and augmented edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), s.v. "κλητός".

Rudolf Bultmann also insists that Paul in Galatians 4:4f declares that Christ's death brought about freedom from the Law itself rather than just a release from the punishment contracted by sinning. Furthermore, according to Paul, the redemption price earned by Christ's death was paid to the powers (primarily the Law) who lay claim to the man who has fallen into their grasp. Bultmann points out that this expression is figurative and not mythological in the sense of paying a ransom price to the devil (such as Gregory of Nyssa proposed).

36. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 297f.
37. Ibid., p. 298.
38. Ibid., p. 140.
39. Ibid., p. 298.
40. An implication of this is that Paul treats Christ's death as unified with his incarnation and resurrection (exaltation). Ibid.
41. Ibid., pp. 298f.
42. Ibid., p. 299.
43. Ibid., p. 300.
44. He judged Wilhem Bousset's "größes Werk", Kyrios Christos, to be "a milestone in New Testament research". Rudolf Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen: Gesammelte Aufsätze von Rudolf Bultmann, 4th ed., 4 vols. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1984), vol. 4, pp. 4, 164; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 270f.

45. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 274.
46. Ibid., p. 279; Wilhelm Bousset, Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), p. 188f, 191; Richard Reitzenstein, Hellenistic Mystery-Religions: Their Basic Ideas and Significance, trans. John E. Steely, Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series, vol. 15, gen. ed. Dikran Y. Hadidian (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: The Pickwick Press, 1978), p. 14.
47. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 52.
48. Ibid., pp. 53, 55.
49. Accordingly, Bultmann discounts out of hand John 1:29; 6:51-58; 19:34b; I John 1:7; 2:2; 3:5; 4:10; 5:6. Oddly enough, in such passages as I John 1:7, John 6:53-56, et al., where "the blood" is mentioned, Bultmann spots the marks of an ecclesiastical editor. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 54.
50. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 300.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Be that as it may, the critic may reply that he was writing to those who already had faith and for whom credibility would not be an issue. Moreover, it would have been less logical according to Paul's outline of Romans to place the salvation-occurrence before the premise of sin.
54. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 301.
55. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 214.
56. Ibid., p. 236.
57. William J. Richardson, Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, with a preface by Martin Heidegger (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), p. 42; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 289.
58. Ibid., p. 59
59. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, The Library of Philosophy and Theology, ed. John McIntyre and Ian T. Ramsey (London: SCM Press, 1962), pp. 212-14; Richardson, Heidegger, p. 71.
60. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 59; Anthony C. Thiselton, The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein, with a forward by Professor J. B. Torrance (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1980), p. 26.
61. Chambers 20th Century Dictionary, ed. E. M. Kirkpatrick, new ed., 1983, s.v. "Revelation"; The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, ed. J. B. Sykes, 7th ed., 1982, s.v. "Revelation".
62. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 58.

63. David E. Roberts, Existentialism and Religious Belief, ed. Roger Hazelton, (New York: Oxford University Press; a Galaxy Book, 1959), p. 150.
64. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 61f.
65. Ibid., p. 61. Nonetheless, one may wish to ask how each person who experiences "revelation" knows that what he experiences as "revelation" may be related to what another calls "revelation" unless there is a generalized concept of what revelation is of which each individual case is one example.

A valuable lesson that Rudolf Bultmann teaches us and one which has been absorbed into the "general talk" and understanding of modern theology is that one proceeds to a text with a presupposition. This can help us guard against projecting our own biases into a text rather than letting the text call our prejudices into question. However, Rudolf Bultmann's explication raises some concerns. Is it categorically true that a "subject-object" ontology is totally inappropriate for understanding man? Is a "subject-object" pre-understanding less fair to the text if it self-consciously approaches the New Testament text by allowing the text to call it into question, even disqualifying it? May not one who approaches a text with a "subject-object" pre-understanding allow the possibility of other pre-understandings interposing themselves in the process of interacting with a text so that the results of an inquiry are not inflexibly predetermined as in ontological pre-understanding? One may allow that it is conceivable that a historian who seeks to understand man or God may approach a text holding more than one pre-understanding each of which may be equally true while yet seemingly contradictory. Rudolf Bultmann himself approaches the text with a rigorous scientific pre-understanding while, at the same time, assuming an existential-ontological presupposition. Has not the situation existed when one with a strictly empirical presupposition has subsequently, after encountering the New Testament text, come to discover (via his empirical pre-understanding) the existence of another pre-understanding (e.g. the presupposition of the existence of supranatural reality) which he allows to qualify and correct his original pre-understanding?

We may observe also that the fundamental existentialist assumption is based upon a "belief" -- a conviction that this is the way man's pre-understanding and existence is and not upon incontrovertible, collaborative empirical proof, logic, or experience. Indeed, the existentialist would deny that there could be such as this.

66. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 62.
67. Ibid., p. 63.
68. Roberts, Existentialism, pp. 155f.; Richardson, Heidegger, p. 80-82.
69. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 63.
70. One might remark that one only knows that he has a "not knowing knowledge" after he knows of himself. If this is so, what prohibits the inquirer from assuming he already has complete knowledge thereby stifling any desire for further inquiry? The term "revelation" is already taken for granted by us as we presuppose that the

New Testament will say what we already think it says. If this is the case, what motivates the "inquirer" to be inquisitive and go beyond his "not knowing knowledge"?

71. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 64.
72. Ibid., p. 71.
73. Heidegger, Being and Time, pp. 82f.
74. Ibid., pp. 284, 286, 239.
75. Ibid., p. 284; Roberts, Existentialism, p. 154.
76. Richardson, Heidegger, p. 76.
77. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 72.
78. Ibid.
79. Furthermore, the New Testament (used by Martin Heidegger and Rudolf Bultmann) posits that the ultimate limit of eternal death affects not only existence in the future, but also the whole of life in the present. Romans 5:12 indicates that there is an organic connection between death and sin such that death, in its full-orbed sense, natural and eternal, is spawned through sin.

It is plausible to suggest that Heidegger's postulate has been to some extent influenced by the Christian tradition. John Macquarrie surmises that it is no accident that Heidegger's thought shows kinship to such thinkers as Augustine, Luther, Kierkegaard, and the scriptures themselves. John Macquarrie, Martin Heidegger, Makers of Contemporary Theology, ed. D. E. Nineham and E. H. Robertson (London: Lutterworth Press, 1968), p. 53.
80. Ibid., p. 51; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 72; Rudolf Bultmann, Theologie des Neuen Testaments von Rudolf Bultmann, 3rd ed. [Tübingen: Verlag J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1958], pp. 289, 294, 298.
81. Lastly, in concluding our thoughts on death as the limiting "what" of revelation, one wonders if a rationalization of the "dying and rising" myths as man's attempt at trying to cover over death is the only appropriate explanation. Might not these themes also be a portrayal of an honest, stubborn, inner "instinctive" optimism which, after observing the perennality of nature, believes that there is some form of life after death for man? Perhaps all accounts cannot be reduced to either one or the other of these interpretations.
82. It would seem that one could reasonably argue that the existentialist is less consistent in his claim at this point than the classical, Christian theologian. The existentialist views death from the perspective of a supernatural God yet does not claim the supernatural Deity's authority for it.
83. Bultmann, Theologie, p. 297.

84. Ibid., p. 407; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 87; Bultmann Faith and Understanding I, p. 286; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 60.
85. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 76; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 204, 209, 211f; Collins German-English English-German Dictionary, s.v. "Aufrufen".
86. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 96.
87. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 210.
88. Ibid.; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 87.
89. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 78.
90. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 306, 310; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 87; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 65.
91. For example, Martin Luther, A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, (London: James Duncan, 1838), p. 49.
92. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 86.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid., p. 76.
95. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 210.
96. Bultmann's premise is that there is, or was, a "natural revelation" through which, from the beginning, man could have knowledge of himself as a creature and thus honor God. However, because man "has forgotten whence he comes", every man stands in a context of self-misunderstanding and enslavement to it. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 82f.
97. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 77; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 210.
98. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 210.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid., pp. 210f.
101. Ibid., p. 211.
102. Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 25; Macquarrie, Heidegger, pp. 9f.
103. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 211
104. John H. S. Kent, "Tutorial session", December 10, 1985.
105. Saint Augustine, The Confessions of Saint Augustine, trans. Edward B. Pusey (New York: Collier Books, 1972), p. 11.
106. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 85.

107. John Macquarrie notes Roger Shinn's distinction between "open humanism" and "closed humanism". "Open humanism" refers "simply to the pursuit of human values in the world" while "closed humanism" goes further to imply that man is the "sole creator of meaning and value in the world". As Macquarrie mentions, Heidegger, in reply to Sartre, argued for an "open humanism". John Macquarrie, Existentialism pp. 28f.
108. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 87.
109. Ibid., p. 82.
110. Ibid., p. 83.
111. Ibid., pp. 79, 83.
112. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 83.
113. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 237.
114. Ibid.
115. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 60; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 286, 308.

It may be interjected that because "signs" are secondary, it does not follow that their identity as works is to be dissolved or that they are unimportant in and of themselves because of their complementary role. Nor does it follow that at any given time "signs" and "miracles" are not preeminent over words in a way that without a "sign", words would be empty of meaning. (John 2:11, 23). Rudolf Bultmann's diminution of "signs" and works as physical activities within the realm of time and space which carry content leads one to query why actions had to be recorded at all by the Gospels. Admittedly, sitting in a boat is an action, but why not simply have Jesus doing his whole work by speaking his message entirely from a boat along the shore of the Galilean Sea?

116. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 290.
117. Ibid., pp. 287f.
118. Ibid.
119. Ibid., pp. 153, 288.
120. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 288.
121. Ibid.
122. Ibid., p. 289.
123. Ibid., p. 152.
124. John Macquarrie, Twentieth-Century Religious Thought: The Frontiers of Philosophy and Theology, 1900-1980, rev. ed. (London: SCM Press, 1981), p. 211.
125. Ibid., p. 212.

126. Ibid., pp. 212f.
127. Ibid., p. 215.
128. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 152.
129. Ibid., p. 153.
130. Thiselton, Two Horizons, p. 171; Macquarrie, Heidegger, p. 29.
131. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 290.
132. Ibid., p. 291. Rudolf Bultmann rejects the secular Greek rendering of the term "word", "Logos", since it represents the philosophical tradition which he desires to overcome. In the Greek tradition, Logos is "the meaningful content of what is said". The Logos is that which makes its contents known so that the meaning rather than "the being spoken" characterizes it. The meaning of Logos is plagued by the same chronic misunderstanding which sidetracks the tradition of Greek thought. In it man's existence is determined by the same pronouncements of reason which determines the being of the cosmos; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 292f.
133. Ibid., pp. 297f.
134. Ibid., p. 299.
135. Ibid., p. 300.
136. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 63.
137. Ibid.
138. Ibid., p. 65.
139. Ibid., p. 66; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 88.
140. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 76.
141. Ibid., p. 72.
142. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 66.
143. Ibid.
144. Ibid., p. 67.
145. Ibid., p. 68.
146. Ibid., p. 69; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 79.
147. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 304.
148. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 235.
149. Ibid., p. 236.
150. Ibid., p. 237.

151. Ibid.
152. Ibid., p. 238.
153. Ibid., p. 283.
154. Ibid.
155. Ibid., p. 241.
156. Ibid., pp. 240f, 208f.
157. Ibid., p. 209.
158. Ibid., p. 241.
159. Ibid.
160. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 307.
161. Ibid., pp. 211, 241f.
162. Ibid., p. 241; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 86.
163. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, p. 244.
164. Ibid., pp. 211f.
165. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 78; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, p. 242.
166. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 76, 79.
167. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 212.
168. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 177. The Paraclete, who is the word preached in the Christian community, continues Jesus' revelation.
169. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 302.
170. Friedrich Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, and The Anti-Christ, trans. with an intro. and commentary by R. J. Hollingdale (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 111; Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One, trans. with an intro. by R. J. Hollingdale (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1964), pp. 23f, 178f, 234, 237.
171. Macquarrie, Heidegger, pp. 38f. Similarly, Collingwood maintained that history is rethinking the thoughts today of personal agents of yesterday. History is the reenactment of past thought in the historian's own mind; R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History, ed. T. N. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 214f.
172. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 304; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 138.
173. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 125f.

174. Does not Rudolf Bultmann take over this assumption in assuming the New Testament expresses the existential-ontological understanding?
175. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 263f.
176. Ibid., p. 264.
177. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 9. Christ's deity cannot be either objectivized into an event of the past nor into an event in a metaphysical sphere; Bultmann, Essays, pp. 286f.
178. For example, liberalism interprets the story of Jesus' baptism as a source for fact. Moreover, it tries to see the inner life, the love and faith of Jesus, as a demonstrable fact; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 125f, 137.
179. Ibid., pp. 127f.
180. Ibid., p. 128.
181. Ibid., p. 132.
182. Ibid., p. 264.
183. Ibid., p. 265.
184. Wilhelm Bousset built upon Johannes Weiss' affirmation that christology is a secondary expression of the New Testament's real religion; Ibid., pp. 269ff.
185. Ibid., p. 277.
186. Ibid., p. 237.
187. Ibid.
188. Ibid., p. 278, 281.
189. Ibid., p. 278.
190. Kendrick Grobel, the translator of the English edition of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament, inserts a parenthetical explanation in the English version clarifying this "historic dimension" as a sphere in the actual living of men which is true "history". Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 305; Bultmann, Theologie, p. 300.
191. Ibid. Other illustrations of this are the Easter stories which are interpreted as signs and pictures of the Easter faith. Even better, they are confessions of faith in it. The one event (Bultmann ascertains that for John, Easter, Pentecost, and the parousia are all one and the same event) means "the victory which Jesus wins when faith arises in man by the overcoming of the offense that Jesus is to him". Phrased another way, when one heeds the Word pronouncing death and life, one believes in the risen Christ. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 306; vol. 2, p. 57.
192. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 280f.

193. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 139.
194. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 300.
195. Ibid.; Emil Brunner remarks in his Dogmatics that this conception was abetted by the Latin translation of the Greek word πιστεύειν as credere whose meaning, to give "credit to" a doctrine, became the Church's established definition. Brunner, Dogmatics, vol. 3, p. 176.
196. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 300f.
197. Brunner, Dogmatics, vol. 3, pp. 237ff.
198. Louis Dupré, Kierkegaard as Theologian (London: Sheed and Ward, 1964), p. 130; Hermann Diem seems unsure whether or not Kierkegaard was aware of the problem and the ramification of his reversal or had sufficiently protected himself against it. Hermann Diem, Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Existence, trans. Harold Knight (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959), p. 90
199. Moreover, Kierkegaard contended that trying to understand God in His Incarnation is vain. The proposition that a man is God is the "absolute paradox" which reason is powerless to understand. Dupré, Kierkegaard, p. 136.
200. Ibid., p. 129.
201. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 243
202. Bultmann, Essays, p. 113; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 305.
203. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 303; 301.
204. Bultmann, Essays, p. 113.
205. Ibid.
206. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 279.
207. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 45.
208. Rudolf Bultmann, Glauben Und Verstehen: Gesammelte Aufsätze von Rudolf Bultmann, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B.Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1965), vol. 3, p. 204; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 241.
209. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 241.
210. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 306; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 238.
211. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 69.
212. Herrmann, Communion with God, pp. 2-5.
213. Ibid., pp. 161f., 220.
214. See note on notitia, assensus, and fiducia in Herrmann, Communion With God, p. 217.

215. Herrmann, Communion With God, p. 225.
216. Rudolf Bultmann states that persons must hear the proclamation and know that the historical man Jesus died.
217. To believe in Jesus as my Saviour is to trust that He who was incarnated, died, and is now alive is the One through whose incarnation, death, and resurrection I am offered forgiveness, declared righteous, and given eternal life. The attributes and ascriptions of Jesus only point to the entity from whom faith is promised and through whom it is given. Integral to the claim that Jesus died for me are the concomitant ascriptions (e. g., the pre-existent Son of God who rose from the dead) which must all be taken together as a united whole leading the believer to Him whom faith grasps.
218. Herrmann, Communion With God, pp. 222ff.
219. Let us venture several additional comments. Is it likely that the first century Gentiles with a Greek world view who heard the testimony to Jesus under the tutelage of Paul would have understood the ascriptions of Jesus to be anything other than informational statements? If they did so understand them, why do we not find in the New Testament specific Pauline letters aimed at counteracting and correcting their misunderstanding? Moreover, in light of the Greek predisposition, why do we not find in the biblical texts any Pauline dialogue or explanation insuring the clarity of his understanding against the Greek ontic framework? Further, assuming Rudolf Bultmann's argument, if the Christians wanted to proclaim these ascriptions of Jesus as objective truth (even if it be argued this is an unauthentic approach to man), how else would they have done it than was done in the New Testament?

CHAPTER THREE

FAITH DESCRIBED

INTRODUCTION

In the preface to his characterization of the full structure and meaning of faith in the New Testament, Rudolf Bultmann recalls in his Theology of the New Testament that "faith" was already introduced in the discussion on "God's righteousness". Moreover, faith's nature was clarified in the investigation of "grace".¹ We may also bear in mind that the presentation of man's existence prior to faith already anticipates and provides a pre-sketch of man's existence under faith.² Therefore, his theological analysis of human existence is brought to consummation in his explication of faith.

Rudolf Bultmann's most concentrated and thorough linguistical and exegetical account of faith -- perhaps of any biblical word considered by him - is presented in his article on "faith" in Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament.³ For background and comparison, he traces the word "faith" in its use and meaning in classical Greek, Hellenism, the Old Testament, Judaism, Philo, and the Septuagint. As far as Christian usage is concerned, he differentiates between "formal", "common" and "specific" Christian usages as well as sets forth Paul's, John's, and the "developing church's" use of the term.

While Rudolf Bultmann concludes that Jesus' use of the term "faith" is not prominent in the New Testament, the substance of what Paul calls "faith" is present in Jesus' radical idea of obedience. If one considers the body of Rudolf Bultmann's discussions of faith as a whole, one discovers that his overriding interest is in John's and, more especially, in Paul's understanding of faith which he finds is, for the most part, consonant with each other's. Since these two are the plumb line for the authentic conception of New Testament faith, only very brief mention can be made of other relevant discussions.

JESUS' USE OF "FAITH"

In setting out the New Testament meaning of faith, Rudolf Bultmann discovers that Jesus' use of the word "faith" is not prominent in, nor fundamental to, the New Testament conception.⁴

Rudolf Bultmann does acknowledge in Jesus and The Word that faith is characteristic of Jesus' thought of God.⁵ According to Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus uses the word "faith" for belief in miracles and in prayer, but it does not mean for him as for Paul and John "the obedience of men under God's redeeming revelation".⁶ Faith for him is neither theoretical belief that God exists nor the final cause of all occurrences. It is not a belief in God which is a part of a world-view which stands in opposition to another world-view.⁷ Faith is the assertion that God is the power which determines man in his concrete reality, in his present life.

According to Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus' use of the word "faith" is not predominate. However, the germinal understanding of what Paul later characterizes as "faith", "obedience", is certainly recognizable and present in Rudolf Bultmann's Jesus. This is manifested in his consideration of Jesus' "ethic of obedience" which he explains in his book Jesus and The Word. While exactly like the Jewish ethic of obedience of later Judaism, Jesus' ethic is fundamentally distinct from theirs in that he conceived radically the idea of obedience.⁸ Jesus looks at man's conduct from the position of the obedience which man owes to God.

More specifically, by the time of later Judaism, the old, Jewish, national regulations had lost their original meaning but Judaism blindly continued to obey them simply because they were commanded.⁹ However, while accepting the absolute authority of Scripture, Jesus diverges from Judaism by examining the content of a Scriptural word and differentiating between those biblical words which were God's command and those that were not.¹⁰ He sets the demand of the law over against the demand of God.¹¹ By this Rudolf Bultmann means that Jesus demonstrates that he rejects the Old Testament

as viewed in the scribal manner as an external, formal, legal authority which supposedly states God's will. God's will is not stated by an eternal authority but is known by man's insight. Jesus shows that God does not bind man by formal authority but leaves to him the insight to recognize what is demanded by God. Rudolf Bultmann establishes that "man is trusted and expected to see for himself what God commands" and demands.¹²

Rudolf Bultmann's argument makes several assumptions. First, he assumes that the canonical, Scriptural commands expressly stated as issuing from God are not to be uncritically accepted as such. Man, such as Jesus, is called upon to determine which are to be taken truly as God's commands. Second, God's will is not expressed by an external authority, but is known only by ^aman's insight. Third, he seems to put extra--canonical Jewish commentary on par with Scripture. This is exemplified in Rudolf Bultmann's assumption that when Jesus weighed the Pharisaic traditions and misconstructions against canonical Scripture (cf. Mark 10:2-9), that is, when the Pharisaic "unwritten law" was judged and found wanting by the written, Scriptural law, Jesus was contradicting the command of God. Rudolf Bultmann contends that when Jesus sifts the Scripture to determine for himself what are God's commands, "the idea of obedience is first radically conceived" in that obedience now becomes subjection to an authority which man understands (that is, one which is reasonable).¹³ Rudolf Bultmann implies a rejection on Jesus' part of the understanding current in rabbinical thought that all written Scriptural laws were to be taken as God's laws irregardless of the fact that God gave reasons for some while for others He did not.¹⁴

Rudolf Bultmann goes on to explain the nature of true obedience for Jesus. True obedience only happens when the Word concerns "me" and is not indifferent to "me". Rather than "doing something obediently", the whole man must stand behind and in what he does.¹⁵

Further, Jesus' obedience frees man from dependence upon formal authority and gives him an easy obedience which depends on his judgement and responsibility.¹⁶ Nonetheless, this responsibility is difficult in the sense that man is to see himself as called to decision -- decision between good and evil, decision for God's will or for his own will.¹⁷

It is this decision, this "crisis of decision" in which man stands before God, from which the demands of God come. Explaining the nature of Jesus' obedience, he says, "The crisis of decision is the situation in which all observation is excluded, for which Now alone has meaning, which is absorbed wholly in the present moment".¹⁸ The "crisis of decision" is the Now in which man must know what to do and what to leave undone. He is insecure before what confronts him. In this moment of decision he has no past standard, no principle, no ethical theory which he can call upon to decide. Neither can he control beforehand the possibilities upon which he must act. Every moment of decision is new. He stands on no firm base but stands alone in empty space. When this is the case, he knows the requirement of the good to be the actual demand of God.¹⁹

Rudolf Bultmann explains that this being which is lived in specific, decisive moments in the present is what constitutes essential being for Jesus. In this actual life lived in specific, decisive moments, man is confronted and claimed by a "Thou" (God who meets man with His claim over whom man can have no control). In fact, it is only this claim which gives him this life as self.²⁰ When he knows himself claimed by a "Thou", this "coming to himself", he knows God.

Therefore, according to Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus says that God claims man and constrains him to decision in the present moment and requires from him obedience.²¹ When the requirement of obedience is grasped, then the thought of grace and forgiveness can be fully understood.²²

As Rudolf Bultmann proceeds in his exposition, he seems to indicate that man recognizes the demand of God when he is confronted and is thrust into a

crisis of decision. This makes him insecure as he realizes he stands alone in the universe without any standard or rational principal whatsoever.

Rudolf Bultmann's thesis regarding the relationship of "the demand of God" to the "crisis of decision" seems to be this; "the demands of God" come from the "crisis of decision" while the "crisis of decision" arises from "the demands of God". One can argue from a logical perspective that this is self-contradictory. Rudolf Bultmann would hold that his thesis is set within the context of a radically different philosophical understanding. The "crisis of decision" and "the demands of God" are not to be viewed as separate objects which mutually exclude one another. The object of historical understanding ("the demands of God") is not a thing in itself in isolation from the mind which contemplates it. That is, a word of God is not a demand or command of God in objective existence independent of the one who interacts with it. As one reflects on a "word of God" and feels his responsibility for the future from which the question of meaning arises, he must be ready to hear the claim of this word, whether or not it is the "demand of God". The subject and the object do not exist independently of one another. The one examining past historical thoughts must re-live and re-enact these past thoughts in his own mind. It is this sort of interaction between subject and object that Rudolf Bultmann has in mind regarding the "demands of God" and "the crisis of decision" of Jesus' obedience.

FAITH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUND

Though the presupposition for Paul's theology of faith is Hellenistic Christianity rather than the Old Testament, classical Greek, or the "oldest Church", nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann's controlling assumption is that New Testament Christianity was a syncretistic phenomenon. Therefore, he sets Paul into context by providing comparative uses of faith.

According to Rudolf Bultmann, the classical Greek, Old Testament, and Septuagint meaning of πιστεύειν , "to trust" or "to put trust in",

overlap one another.²³ However, the Old Testament concept of faith is richer in content because the meaning "to obey", to renounce self-confidence and to obey God's demands, is often the predominate one.²⁴

While Judaism echoes the leading Old Testament motifs, Judaism diverges from it by letting faithful obedience to the law become obedience to the letter of the law which counts commandments fulfilled as merit.²⁵

In the Septuagint, the Hebrew derivatives of 'MN are generally translated by ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ which means "faith" and never by ΠΕΠΟΙΘΕΝΑΙ which means "trust". Therefore, he concludes that the Septuagint wants to keep "faith" and "trust" separate.²⁶

Hellenistic Christianity, according to Rudolf Bultmann the "historical presupposition for Paul's theology", understood ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ("faith" and "belief") and ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ("believing") to mean "acceptance of the Message" (Romans 10:14-17). In this understanding, the Hellenistic concept of faith achieved a unique meaning which it had not had in the Old Testament or other ancient religions.²⁷ Furthermore, the expression "believe in him" (ΕΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ) is to be rendered "believe that" and does not convey a personal relation to Christ.²⁸

In a complicated and debateable chain of reasoning, Rudolf Bultmann concludes that the New Testament's "formal" use of faith views ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΕΙΣ with its unique meaning of "believe on" means in substance "believe that", ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΟΤΙ.²⁹ Further, the term ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΕΙΣ is derived from ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ with the dative meaning "to consider credible" rather than "to trust".³⁰

THE COMMON CHRISTIAN USAGE OF FAITH

Rudolf Bultmann shifts his gaze from the "formal" New Testament use to the common Christian use of "faith". He breaks down this common Christian usage into "primitive Christianity" and what he calls the "specifically Christian" usage of "faith".³¹

"Primitive Christianity" largely highlights the Old Testament and the Judaistic heritage of πίστις (πιστεύειν, πίστος). In "primitive Christianity", πίστις became the leading term for the relation of man to God because faith in the Old Testament and in Judaism was already an important term for the religious relationship.³²

In setting forth the "specifically Christian usage" of πίστις, Rudolf Bultmann posits that πίστις εἰς is the vehicle which conveys a unique meaning distinct from others. To quote him, πίστις here is "the acceptance of the Christian kerygma and consequently of the saving faith which recognizes and appropriates God's work of salvation brought about by Christ".³³ Its principal implication is "giving credence" although the elements of obedience, trust, hope, and loyalty can also be included in it.³⁴

In Romans 10:9, Paul gives the content of the Christian faith. The terms ὁμολογεῖν and πιστεύειν, equivalents in synonymous parallelism, indicate that the Christian faith consists in acknowledging Jesus as Lord.

The question which Rudolf Bultmann says arises is whether or not the phrase, πιστεύειν εἰς; can take on a special sense; that is, can it also be used to denote a personal relationship to Christ with the same significance as a relationship with God?³⁵ Though according to him πιστεύειν εἰς practically never in the New Testament denotes a relationship to God and is ambiguous in its use in reference to Jesus, Rudolf Bultmann discerns that πιστεύειν ἐπί with the dative denotes a relationship with God and with Jesus.³⁶

Hence πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν Ἰησοῦν does in fact entail a personal relation to Christ analogous to the relation to God, though different from it. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the contrast is manifested in the fact that in the Old Testament when the relationship with God is called "faith in God", this faith as "obedience" and "loyalty" is regarded as being directed to the God whose existence is already always taken for granted. In the New Testament,

faith is not obedience to the Lord who has always been known, but it is laying hold of the conviction that for the believer this Lord Jesus Christ exists.³⁷ Therefore, says Rudolf Bultmann, "This Lord first meets him only in the kerygma."³⁸ In the Old Testament, God was already assumed to exist on the basis of the past. "Belief in him" was not an affirmation of His existence but a matter of loyalty to what was already known. On the other hand, in the New Testament, God's deed in Jesus Christ must first be affirmed to exist for the believer.

FAITH IN PAUL

According to Rudolf Bultmann's Kittel article on "Faith", the common Christian usage is essential for that of Paul's usage of faith.³⁹ After surveying the formal and common Christian usage of "faith", Rudolf Bultmann is in position to set forth Paul's understanding of πίστις which he considers to be the key and controlling witness of New Testament faith. Further, the concept of πίστις is central to Paul's theology. "Faith" is the condition for the receipt of "righteousness" which takes the place of "works".⁴⁰ Faith is neither a spiritual nor human attitude of mind nor a feeling of confidence in God but, preeminently, "the acceptance of the kerygma".⁴¹

As "the acceptance of the kerygma" (Romans 10:17), Paul's conception of faith can be variously expressed: it is response to the proclaimed word; the "submission to the way of salvation determined by God and made accessible in Christ"; or "the subjection of oneself to the act of God that is proclaimed and realized in the word".⁴² As Romans 10:9 evinces, πίστις is also simultaneously ὁμολογία ("confession"). Rudolf Bultmann sets forth that for Paul πίστις is always "faith in ..."; that is, faith always refers to its object which is the "preaching" or, more specifically, the "occurrence", God's saving deed in Christ.⁴³ The object of faith or belief is expressed by a ὅτι clause as in Romans 10:9, I Thessalonians and Romans 6:8. Equivalent to the ὅτι clause are the locutions "believe in" or "faith in"

ἐἷς in Galatians 2:16; Romans 10:14; Philippians 1:29; πρὸς, Philemon 5; ἐν, Galatians 3:26; and ἐπὶ, Romans 9:33; 10:11). An objective genitive such as in Galatians 2:16, 3:22 is an abbreviating substitute.⁴⁴ Rudolf Bultmann states, "In the ὁμολογία, the believer turns himself away from himself and confesses Jesus Christ as his Lord".⁴⁵ This is at the same time a confession that he owes all that he is and has to what God has done in Christ. For example, it is only as an act of confession effective as action that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is effective for salvation.⁴⁶

"Faith" is confession but not in the sense of a single act done once for all, such as a declaration of church membership. Rudolf Bultmann explains, "It is a placing of one's self at God's disposal, for the act to which God summons a man at any given moment."⁴⁷ Faith in the cross and resurrection is not the acceptance of some irrational mythological doctrine but rather primarily submission to the judgement of God, the renunciation of all boasting.⁴⁸

Absent from Paul, as the other New Testament writers, is any description of "the psychological process involved in the development of faith". Rudolf Bultmann maintains this on the strength of Galatians 3:23-26 which he interprets as only a story of salvation, not the beginning of faith in the individual. According to Paul, the salvation effected in history is realized not in an individual's religious experience but in baptism (Galatians 3:27-29).⁴⁹ Just as little is faith a mystical experience, mood or emotion.⁵⁰

In accordance with Rudolf Bultmann, Paul proclaims that πίστις is simultaneously ὕπακοή. Rudolf Bultmann throughout his work consistently drives home the point that "Paul understands faith primarily as obedience".⁵¹ He establishes that this faith is the "simple surrender to God's grace in renunciation of the desire for recognition".⁵² He analyzes the nature of this faith which is "obedience" in the following way.

Faith presupposes unbelieving existence. Herein, the Jews "in boasting" (which summarizes the essence of the Jewish sin and the "real sin of men") of

their works and the Greeks "in boasting" in their wisdom seek the satisfaction of their urge to be recognized by God.⁵³ The one who "boasts" seeks self-glorification in that he seeks to gain a recognition in God's sight that God cannot withhold from him by virtue of his achievements. "Boasting" (self-glorification) is a desire "for recognition by one's own strength and achievement". It is thinking one can extract recognition through what he does, thereby making himself secure for himself and in the presence of God.⁵⁴ The Jews try "to establish 'their own righteousness'" when they desire to establish the legal grounds by which to prove themselves to God.⁵⁵ The Gentiles, by adopting a world view (even a theistic one), by conceiving of the world without considering the question of their own existence and seeing themselves as objects, strive for wisdom by making speaking "from God" an understanding "of ours" and, consequently, sin.⁵⁶ Both alike, as well as all men, seek to have acknowledged the justice of their position which will confirm them over against all the lack of self-assurance.⁵⁷

However, God's grace is revealed in Christ crucified which frees man from the illusion that man can win recognition in his own strength in the sight of God.⁵⁸ Pure surrender to this grace redeems man from the frantic struggling of the urge for recognition; for in "obedience", man's pride is broken.⁵⁹ Contrarily, man does not wish to throw off the conflict of the urge for recognition because he thinks he will be lost if he surrenders himself. However, it is precisely in losing himself in surrender that he will find himself for the first time; for obedience is subjection of oneself to the act of God that is proclaimed and realized in the word (Romans 1:15, 10:3). It is the act of genuine obedience in which man radically renounces his own existence and gives glory to God.⁶⁰ Therefore, "obedience" is faith because it is an abandonment of pride, a letting go of oneself, a surrendering of oneself to God's grace.⁶¹ ὑπακοή is "the acceptance of the divine grace".⁶² ὑπακοή is this because the divine act of grace means that man with his sins and his striving for righteousness or wisdom is judged by Christ's

cross. Therefore, faith is the obedient acceptance of the divine verdict on his previous self-understanding.⁶³

Rudolf Bultmann submits a number of Scriptural passages in support of his contention that for Paul faith is "obedience" and "obedience" is faith.⁶⁴ For example, he maintains that Paul combines Romans 1:8 ("because your faith is proclaimed in all the world") and Romans 16:19 (For while your obedience is known to all") to express the purpose of apostleship -- "to bring about the obedience which faith is" (Romans 1:5).⁶⁵ In Romans 11:30-32, the Jews refusal of faith is denoted by "disobey".⁶⁶

Rudolf Bultmann further discovers that Paul's concept of faith entails a close relation between obedience and trust. πίστις as "trust" (in general terms) appears infrequently in Paul.⁶⁷ What Rudolf Bultmann has in mind here is the shade of trust which is confidence that God will help me here and now, in this and that. It is the trusting that God will carry out his promises or the putting trust in his power to work miracles. This nuance gives way to Paul's primary sense of "trust" as radical surrender to God's will.⁶⁸ In Paul's primary sense, "trust" is the trust in God that arises when, in the believer's eyes, only darkness and death are in sight. "Trust" presupposes the obedience that is willing to surrender everything of one's own to death.⁶⁹ In fact, Rudolf Bultmann concludes that at the deepest level "obedience" and "trust" are one thing. For "trust in" or "confidence in" God is the obedience of faith.⁷⁰ This is proven by the fact that Paul never uses πιστεύειν with the dative (except in Galatians 3:6 and Romans 4:3) to gain the simple sense of "trust". Rather, he distinguishes between the trust aspect and obedience aspect of faith by using παραθέβαι or παροίησις. Only once in II Corinthians 1:9 (perhaps twice, in Philippians 3:3f) does παραθέβαι refer to the obedience aspect of faith of "complete surrender of one's own care and strength to God".⁷¹ Rudolf Bultmann categorically rules out the possibility of a relation of trust to Jesus. As a Thou, a fellow, he has vanished as every Thou does when he dies.⁷²

In further characterizing faith, Rudolf Bultmann clarifies how faith may be spoken of as a "leap in the dark". Faith is not the standing at the crossroads without a signpost, a blind risk, or a random groping. It is not venturing out in a direction and risking arriving at one's goal.⁷³ Faith is not being convinced of the truth of the proclamation of God's forgiving love but rather letting one's concrete "now" be determined by it. If the proclamation is really valid for me and for my concrete life situation, it is only understandable in the situation. One cannot believe in general, alongside of, or behind one's other relationships. One must believe here and now. If one does not let *one's* concrete present be qualified by the word, then one has not believed it. Only when one's situation is understood in terms of the word and when one sees his neighbor in the other person who encounters him, has he believed.⁷⁴

Rudolf Bultmann maintains that for Paul faith arises from what is heard and contains a knowing as well as giving rise to knowledge.⁷⁵ A pre-understanding of faith is given in the old existence and old self-understanding. Faith is not learning any new truths or information that were not present before faith. Neither is it a proposition one can have ready at hand.⁷⁶ Belief is not a scientific theory, mere knowledge, or dogma.⁷⁷ Neither is faith a grasp of the work of Christ.⁷⁸ The word is "understood" only when the cross is seen as "grace" and "love". Because the proclamation is "understood", it is assumed that those addressed hear the proclamation. "Understanding" does not mean the ability to deduce from the proclamation an explanation which can be classified according to one's Weltanschauung. It means rather that the individual under the impact of hearing learns to understand himself anew.⁷⁹ This new, self-understanding of faith, the "existentiell" understanding or "believing" existence, arises out of the old self-understanding and "unbelieving" existence.

In further characterization of the nature of faith in Paul, Rudolf Bultmann states that besides ΠΙΣΤΙΣ indicating the act of becoming a believer, it also describes the state of being a believer. This is manifested in the use of

εἶναι and ἐστάναι ἐν τῇ πίστει in such texts as Romans 14:22 and I Corinthians 16:13.⁸⁰ Having stated this, he quickly moves to dispel any notion that being a believer is a static condition. He affirms, "Faith is not an act which can be performed once for all, an act by which justification is achieved."⁸¹ Faith is not the once for all resolve to join the Christian religion or "a once accepted world-view". "Rather", he enjoins, "it has reality only as the obedience of faith that is always new."⁸² Faith may begin with an initial resolve and confession, but faith's existence is certainly not a simple state that is begun or the natural development that now gets under way. If this were the case, the act of faith would be turned into a process in the past and would be regarded as a "work".⁸³ Christian faith is never a possession, whether a conviction or a state of feeling of my "inner life" at which I could look away at my tasks and duties, exigencies and temptations. Rather, faith must be constantly won, laid hold of and realized anew in the decision of the moment.⁸⁴ Uncanniness which is based in sin remains a constant threat and constantly overcomes the rightwised sinner as soon as he tries to lead his life by and for himself. The man of faith is constantly tempted and constantly experiences God's wrath so must constantly take refuge in God's grace.⁸⁵ The past has not been blotted out but is present as something which is to be continually conquered.⁸⁶

What Rudolf Bultmann means by "state" in this context may be well illustrated by his allusion to Romans 11:20. He translates it "you have won your position through faith". He interprets this to mean that "to be a Christian is to be constantly relating oneself to God's act of salvation". The term "state" herein seems to mean "constant relating to God's act"; that is, "the being constantly under the demand of God". Indeed, along with faith there can be a state of consciousness. However, as long as it is a state of consciousness, it cannot be faith.⁸⁷

To speak of the faith of men is to accept the full paradox of asserting that which cannot be affirmed of any visible man.⁸⁸ Faith is opposed to sight.⁸⁹

The faith of men refers to something unverifiable as a spiritual situation and which must never be identified with any situation.⁹⁰ Rudolf Bultmann recognizes the ramifications of this understanding when he says, "From this concept of faith arises the polemic against all 'religion of experience', against piety, sense of sin, and inspiration."⁹¹ The justified man is believed in faith. One cannot trust experience. As he expresses it, "I can never so relate myself to my experience that I can put my trust in it. I can trust only the promises of God."⁹²

While the state of being might seem to contradict the aspect of faith as single decisive action, Paul, according to Rudolf Bultmann, mentions degrees and possibilities of πίστις for individuals. There are "deficiencies in faith" (I Thessalonians 3:10); growth in faith (II Corinthians 10:15); fullness of faith (Romans 4:21); and weakness in faith (Romans 14:1).⁹³ Rudolf Bultmann links the being "weak in faith" in Romans 14:1f to being weak in conscience in I Corinthians 8:7-12 in which he deduces Paul's principle: believers stand in the same faith, their decisions about what to do and their practices diverge because their πίστεύειν has to be worked out in the conduct of each one.⁹⁴

AN ANALYSIS OF PAUL'S UNDERSTANDING OF FAITH

From Rudolf Bultmann's perspective, the precursor and presupposition for Paul's Theology of faith is Hellenistic Christianity rather than the Old Testament, classical Greek, or the "oldest Church". Nevertheless, one who expects him to trace the lineage of influence upon Paul's theology of faith coursing back in one single stream to some point "A" will be frustrated. One must be cognizant of Rudolf Bultmann's controlling proposition that primitive Christianity was a syncretistic phenomenon. According to his research, the theological milieu which preceded Paul was one of dynamic flux in which theological splintering was the order of the day as Christianity pressed beyond its Palestinian bounds.⁹⁵

The primitive Christian gospel was preached in terms intelligible to Hellenistic audiences who in turn interpreted the message in their own way in the light of their own spiritual needs.⁹⁶ Even within Hellenistic Christianity, various theological mutations occurred so that Hellenistic Christianity was no unitary phenomenon.⁹⁷ Therefore, Paul, more or less in the fashion of the twentieth-century historical critic, selected from Hellenistic Christianity (and other strands) what suited his theological needs and purposes. If we bring this fact to bear upon the topic of faith, we observe that Paul in the main ignores the Old Testament, the Septuagint, and the classical Greek view and adopts for his own Hellenistic Christianity's conception of faith as "acceptance of the kerygma". One must comment that throughout Rudolf Bultmann's step by step linguistic treatment of "faith" in its various historical contexts, the concept of "faith" with its overlapping meanings remains sufficiently ambiguous, fluid, and ambidextrous at each stage for any definite tendency to emerge as a result of a response to a particular historical circumstance.

Rudolf Bultmann's view of the development of Paul's theology of faith assumes two opposing propositions. On the one hand, he assumes that pre-converted Paul did not know what he needed before the outside authority, the proclaimed Gospel, summoned him to life. If he had already known what he needed, he would have had no need to respond to that which judged his self-understanding and called him to faith. On the other hand, if one insists that he accepted the salvation-occurrence because he, in the manner of a historical critic, knew what he needed, then would it be accurate to say he submitted himself to the proclamation's radical judgement of himself -- his past way of thinking and his previous self-understanding? It is maintained that Paul selected what he needed from the various strands of current thought in Palestinian Christianity from the Old Testament Jewish tradition or from Hellenistic Christianity. Rudolf Bultmann presumes Paul would know what he wanted and what would suit his needs. Is not Rudolf Bultmann implicitly asserting that Paul held two mutually exclusive attitudes in

equipoise? The authoritative word, the gospel preached, whose judgement he radically accepts is at the same time also submitted to his own judgement. What or who is the controlling criteria here? On the one hand, there is radical acceptance of a word; and on the other hand, a simultaneously radical questioning of a word. In other words, why is one preached word accepted without question and another preached word questioned without acceptance?

If, as Rudolf Bultmann contends, every hearer of the Gospel interprets the proclaimed message in his own way, then we may well conclude that the meaning it has for any one hearer will be different from the meaning it has for the next hearer.⁹⁸ Assuming this is the way the Gospel is heard and transmitted, is it likely that we would find in the New Testament any one transmission referred to as "the Gospel or "the kerygma"? Why should we expect to find a fixed affirmation with a fixed syntactical pattern of words that endures intact through every historical situation if at every communication what is said and heard is rewritten and reshaped according to one's own particular needs?

Rudolf Bultmann contends that πίστις is ὑπακοή and ὑπακοή is πίστις. He argues that they are one and the same thing. It is clear that he is arguing in the first instance that obedience is not an element of faith or that faith is not an element of obedience but that they are simultaneously one and the same. He assumes that because he finds the two words "faith" and "obedience" related in Romans 1:5 ("the obedience of faith"), they are equated elsewhere when each is used separately.⁹⁹ The logical connection between Romans 1:8 and Romans 16:19 and Romans 1:5 is as follows: whereas, the Romans' faith or obedience is known to the world; and, whereas, the purpose of apostleship is to bring about "the obedience of faith" among all the nations, therefore, because their "faith" and their "obedience" is known in all the world, then "faith" and "obedience" are synonymous. However, it does not follow that because their "faith" is known in the world and their "obedience" is also reported among all that the separate terms have

one and the same meaning.

Are we to conclude that because the Colossians' "faith in Christ Jesus" and their love "for all the saints" had been spread abroad, then "faith" and "love" or even "faith", "love", and "obedience" were all synonymous?¹⁰⁰ While there is certainly agreement among scholars that "obedience" is involved in "faith", Rudolf Bultmann's proposal that the two are synonymous is unconvincing.¹⁰¹ Further, if "faith" and "obedience" are equated, then in their fundamental sense there is no difference in the meaning of the two words. In equating "faith" and "obedience", he in reality dwarfs the traditional sense of "faith" as "trust" and "reliance" and allows it to be overshadowed by the traditional meaning of "obedience" as willingness to be subject to an authority.¹⁰² This is exemplified further by the fact that his general way of expressing the relation is to put "obedience" in the predicate and make it the larger term. That is not to say that he does not equally express the converse (obedience of faith) in order to denote their complete synonymity. For their fundamental usage in Paul, Rudolf Bultmann has planed away the distinctiveness of the two words "faith" and "obedience". The meaning of "faith" and "obedience" is fundamentally reduced to the one meaning of surrender and subjection to the Word of God. John Wesley's understanding of faith as a divine, inner conviction, of course, is given no consideration.¹⁰³

Rudolf Bultmann's description of faith as "the acceptance of the kerygma" captures prominent features of Paul's concept of "faith". The element of faith which may be labeled man's "response" (denoted by Rudolf Bultmann as "acceptance" or "decision") is recognized by scholars to be a vital aspect of faith.¹⁰⁴

Furthermore, Rudolf Bultmann's point that man's response of faith is a response to the "kerygma" likewise meets with consensus.¹⁰⁵ However, the debate is enjoined with him over the nature of this "kerygma", the object of faith. For him, the object of faith is the "preaching" itself; that is, the occurrence of "the now" in which "preaching" as the demand of God judges

man and calls him to decision. The object, the "preaching", does not refer back to some objective content. More especially, when Paul names the object "Jesus Christ", Rudolf Bultmann holds that Paul is not referring to the dead, historical man Jesus or a supernatural person but the salvation-occurrence.¹⁰⁶

Contrarily, as has been pointed out, John Wesley and classical theologians would take issue with Rudolf Bultmann's thesis and assert that Jesus Christ, the living, supernatural God-man, is the ultimate object of faith and the content of the kerygma. Certainly, orthodox theologians would allow that the term "Jesus Christ" may comprehend in a particular context Christ's saving act. However, when they refer to Christ's saving work, they are referring back to the person Jesus Christ Himself who performed it in the past and who now actually lives to make it efficacious in the present.¹⁰⁷

Rudolf Bultmann maintains that only the kerygma communicates the knowledge of salvation. Other traditional commentators make the distinction in Romans 10:14 that it is the person Christ Himself who died upon the cross and rose again who is speaking the message.¹⁰⁸

The manner in which Rudolf Bultmann understands the nature of the object of faith may possibly interlock with and explain, partially at least, the reason why he translates "faith in" as "faith that". Moreover, it probably also indicates why he fails to find the traditional sense of "trust" or "reliance in" the Almighty, personal God important to "faith". Further, it illumines also why he cannot speak of "faith in Christ" as a relationship with Jesus Christ in the sense of a relation of confident trust in the person Jesus. For Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus like any other person when he dies can no longer be a "Thou" to another. It would be ironic indeed if an existentialist attempted to argue that a believer could have a trusting, personal relationship to a proclamation, to an impersonal kerygma which originated, as far as could be ascertained, from an impersonal God. In summary, Rudolf Bultmann advocates that faith is submission to a proclamation whereas John Wesley views it as subjection to the Person, Jesus Christ.

Rudolf Bultmann claims that rather than use ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ with the dative to gain the simple sense of "trust", Paul uses ΠΕΠΟΙΘΕΝΑΙ or ΠΕΠΟΙΘΗΣΙΣ. If we compare Rudolf Bultmann's previous comparisons of these terms we find this pattern: the Septuagint kept ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ quite separate from ΠΕΠΟΙΘΗΣΙΣ; Hellenistic Christianity, to whom Paul's letters ostensibly are in debt, interchanged the two terms. Paul, on the other hand, as we have noted, kept them separate -- almost. Rudolf Bultmann acknowledges that Paul uses ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ with the dative to mean "trust" in Galatians 3:6 and Romans 4:3. That the lines of demarcation between ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ and ΠΕΠΟΙΘΗΣΙΣ can be drawn as sharply as Rudolf Bultmann would like -- especially since they were interchanged in Hellenistic Christianity and even, as he admits, in Paul -- leaves one slightly skeptical.

One relevant word study which one would like to have seen addressed in Rudolf Bultmann's philological discussions is a treatment of the terms ὑπακοή ("obedience") and ὑπακούω ("to obey"). These are terms that Arndt and Gingrich's lexicon consistently translate as "obedience".¹⁰⁹ Because "obedience" is such a strategic term for Rudolf Bultmann and, whereas he was meticulous in setting forth the distinctions of the use of the ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ word group and their relation with ΠΕΙΘΩ, an inclusion of a thorough discussion of ὑπακοή and its relation to "faith" may be important. It would perhaps clarify why Paul more frequently employs the terms ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ and ΠΙΣΤΙΣ for "obedience" rather than the available term ὑπακοή.

Rudolf Bultmann's assessment of the nature of the relationship to God in Jesus Christ in the New Testament does not allow for the obvious, favourable parallel which John Wesley finds that Paul sketches between Abraham's believing reliance upon the personal God and that faith of Abraham's New Testament sons (Galatians 3:6 and Romans 4:3).¹¹⁰

PAULINE FAITH IN CONTRAST TO JUDAISM

For Rudolf Bultmann, Paul's concept of faith ("man under faith") is further illustrated in its contrast to Judaism and Gnosticism. Paul agrees with Judaism that the authenticity which man seeks is "righteousness".¹¹¹ The totally unique quality of the relationship of man to God (represented by Paul's regard for πίστις as the acceptance of God's saving act which involves continual reference to it) is expressed by Paul's firmly consistent attachment of salvation's blessings to πίστις.¹¹² While in both Judaism and in Paul the blessings are termed δικαιοσύνη, Paul firstly diverges from Judaism by holding that God's eschatological sentence of judgement has already been passed in the salvation-occurrence.¹¹³ To be "in Christ" means to stand within a new history which is not world history and not history of sin but is eschatological event.¹¹⁴ Secondly, Rudolf Bultmann states Paul is distinguished from Judaism by holding that δικαιοσύνη is bestowed as a gift rather than by fulfillment of the law by works.¹¹⁵ The whole letter to the Galatians is an offensive attack against the misunderstanding which can still arise, mainly, that πίστις must be supplemented by the performance of works. Rudolf Bultmann says this makes it clear that πίστις is complete surrender of man to God which man cannot decide to make of his own accord.¹¹⁶

Paul states that the law is disqualified as a means of winning acceptance in God's sight by man's achievements.¹¹⁷ Faith sees the Old Testament history as a history of failure. Nonetheless, it is a history of promise in that faith's understanding of the way of salvation is only understood by those who know the false way in the law.¹¹⁸ When Paul demands the believer to fulfill the law, the ἔργα νόμου are not rejected for their contents but for the manner in which they were carried out. He rejects ἔργα νόμου as a way of salvation because man wishes to use them as a basis for his self-confidence and his boasting, to make a claim on God.¹¹⁹

Rudolf Bultmann considers more closely the nature of the relationship between "faith" and "works" and how they are distinguished from one another. Indeed, "obedience" is present in performing 'works' as well as it is in faith. Notwithstanding this, "works" are man's achievement which he has to fulfill in his own strength.¹²⁰ In a "work", Rudolf Bultmann urges, I remain the man I am. I not only place my work outside of me, but I also go beside it in a way that I can assess it.

Herein, Rudolf Bultmann is criticizing "work" on the grounds of the existentialist concern that a "work" is what is done without my involvement, without me. It is done without my involvement through the performance of "works" because in a "work" man does not make a "decision", an "act". "Decision" is the essence of true, human existence.¹²¹ Though "faith" is a motion of the will, it is not a "work". It is not the motion of the will per se that may qualify πίστις as a "work", but the particular motion of the will. Namely, πίστις is not to be considered a "work" because the motion of the will involved in it is the negation of the will. In the performance of a "work" a "merely formal renunciation" occurs in that the will lets the content of its accomplishment be dictated by an external authority. In so doing, the will thinks it has a right to be proud.¹²²

In differentiating between "faith" and "works", Rudolf Bultmann steams toward the Scylla and Charybdis of grace and free will. He states that faith can only be understood and realized in tandem with God's act of salvation. It is not a general reliance on God that is possible at all times and in all places.¹²³ Faith is a gift which is God-wrought.¹²⁴ The saving event creates the historical possibility of faith.¹²⁵ The Jewish way of works of the Law in the Old Testament was a failure because true faith is possible only through God's gracious act in Christ.¹²⁶

Salvation becomes a reality whenever this saving act of God is grasped in the "resolve" to act. "Precisely this resolve is faith," affirms Rudolf Bultmann.¹²⁷ Faith as response to the proclaimed word of God's gracious act

is itself part of the salvation-occurrence.¹²⁸ While faith is said to "come" and "to be revealed", it, nevertheless, still has the decision character that belongs to its nature as "obedience".¹²⁹ The word spoken by God is a must which is directed at us and confronts us and is wholly outside our control.¹³⁰ Rudolf Bultmann declares, "Since the believer experiences the possibility of the faith-decision as grace, it is only as a gift of grace that he can understand his decision -- his own decision!"¹³¹ Faith is only the affirmation of God's action upon us and the answer to his Word directed to us.¹³² He who has made the decision of faith can understand his faith decision only as that which God's "prevenient grace" made possible.¹³³ In other words, after (or in) the faith-decision, one views it as God-given.

Furthermore, the decision to believe is normally different from other decisions. In other decisions, one comes to his decision on the basis of considerations which remain outside of the sphere of decision. In the decision to believe, all considerations which usually contribute to decision making are "uprooted". They are called in question and called to decision. Therefore, man is entirely free so that he stands in the open. Belief comes to pass in the abandonment of all security. It is just this which distinguishes belief from "works".¹³⁴ The act of belief is not to be understood as an established work of man's own purposeful activity but simply as a God-given free act.

Rudolf Bultmann insists that faith is an act "in the highest sense" and at the same time the opposite of every "work", every achievement. This is so because in this act man denies all that he does to establish existence.¹³⁵ The acceptance of the message in faith is an act of obedience because the message demands man to surrender his previous self-understanding. "Faith's obedience" is genuine obedience which God's Law demanded rather than the Jewish obedience to the Law which men sought to use in order to establish their own righteousness.¹³⁶

Faith may be the condition for the reception of grace but not in the way that the believer may think he has fulfilled a condition or may lay claim to grace. Rudolf Bultmann says, "Faith is a genuine act precisely in its consciousness that nothing is owed to itself, but everything to the grace which comes into contact with it."¹³⁷

Faith is also a "free act" in a more philosophical sense. Rudolf Bultmann explains that only in the "free act" does one become something for the first time. It is the primary act in which we become certain of ourselves.¹³⁸ In an assumption particularly favoured by the existentialist and herein applied to the interpretation of faith, Rudolf Bultmann presupposes the proposition that to exist is to decide. Thus, in faith I know I exist because to decide is to exist.¹³⁹ Rudolf Bultmann states, "Faith is only faith in so far as it is decision"¹⁴⁰ In the act of faith, I am aware that my being is in the act. Real belief in God always grows out of the realization that being is an "unknown quality" of which one is always becoming conscious in the "moment" of living.¹⁴¹ As in the analogy of human friendship, the act of love is genuine if I am really in the doing of it and do not stand alongside it.¹⁴² Hence, faith is not to be found anywhere objectively present except in action.¹⁴³ Faith is always uncertain when we reason about it, observe it from the outside, or talk about it. Only in act is it sure.¹⁴⁴

"How is it possible to have a free act and an awareness of being chosen at one and the same time?" asks Rudolf Bultmann. He replies that it is they who see from the outside that ask such a question. It is impossible to consider both simultaneously if one thinks of "being chosen" as a literal, speculative phrase about God's predestination. When a free decision for God is made, there is awareness that God is allowed to act on it. In other words, awareness of being chosen exists only in so far as there is faith. Therefore, it may be said that "election" occurs only in faith --not before or after. No one can speculate outside of faith about whether or not he is chosen.¹⁴⁵

Rudolf Bultmann interprets the unity of grace and freedom as analogous to personal friendship. In the situation with an employee, one fulfills certain conditions and gets "rights" or a claim. Contrarily, in friendship all that one does for a friend has a purpose of revealing oneself to his friend. One does not seek to earn love. If one's love is returned and it comes to the free act of surrender, then one knows that his own surrender is the gift of the other. One knows that he is "chosen" and actually exists and has his being from the other party. One is transformed and has a new being as a result of this genuine friendship. One can say that the new being ~~one~~ receives from ~~one's~~ friend is a gift.¹⁴⁶

AN ANALYSIS OF PAULINE FAITH IN CONTRAST TO JUDAISM

While drawing on the formal statements of Paul for the dichotomy of "faith" and "works", Rudolf Bultmann rationalizes the distinction in the light of existentialist concern. The assumptions and reasons given in this Pauline context to explain the distinction between "faith" and "works" closely parallel those given to explain the distinction between radical obedience in Jesus and obedience in Judaism.

In focusing upon the definition of "works", John Wesley would accept Rudolf Bultmann's description of "works" as man's achievements which he seeks to fulfill in his own strength to make a claim on God.

The other characteristics of "works" that Rudolf Bultmann gives demonstrate his existential penchant. For instance, he states a "work" is that in which I remain the man I am. He means by a man remaining the same as he is that the man continues to view his activities from the "subject-object" perspective of the old Greek ontology. When this is the case, the automatic existential-ontological assumption is that the activity is done without the involvement of the man.

John Wesley who was not an existentialist would, nevertheless, share the concern that man ought to be involved in what he does. Indeed, the

existentialist shares a classical concern which engaged Jesus as he preached that love for God was a matter of the heart and inner man and not merely the perfunctory performance of good deeds. However, John Wesley would disagree with Rudolf Bultmann's assumption that the perspective of the "old ontology" preempts a man from having true faith and being involved in his acts.

Rudolf Bultmann also emphasizes that in a "work", the content of the will's accomplishment is dictated by an external authority. Here again is the existentialist reaction to "outside authority" and "formal" law which tries to establish true law.

Moreover, Rudolf Bultmann also assumes that the man remains the man he is in a "work" because in a "work" he does not make a "decision". Firstly, "faith" is a gift which is solely brought about by the saving event of Jesus Christ. The distinction between the "decision" of faith and decisions of "works" is that the "decision" of faith is specifically the decision made in response to God's gracious act in Christ. Further, Rudolf Bultmann locates the uniqueness of the faith-decision in the fact that all considerations -- which form the bases of every other decision -- are abandoned in this decision. This is tantamount to saying that the old ontological framework must be discarded in this decision. John Wesley's view does not categorically expel the use of reason or the "old ontology" in the faith-decision. Furthermore, the distinction between the "decision" of faith and every other decision in "works" turns finally upon what "faith" is conceived to be.

In the context of "faith" and "works", Rudolf Bultmann, as John Wesley, intentionally desires to strike a medium between God's sovereign grace and human free will. On the one hand, God is viewed as initiating the "summons" and creating the opportunity for man's decision. On the other hand, man has the freedom in which to decide and respond to the offer of grace -- either to accept or reject it. On the surface, this is not an affirmation to which John Wesley (or a Catholic) would be opposed. Classical Protestants -- whether John Wesley or predestinarian -- would depart from Rudolf Bultmann by

holding that while salvation may not be realized in personal existence until a personal response to the salvation act had occurred, nevertheless, the salvation of mankind had been effected quite apart from man in Jesus' death and resurrection before individual persons had responded. This assertion would be repudiated by Rudolf Bultmann on the grounds that salvation is not a fact in general but only a specific situation.

Furthermore, though Rudolf Bultmann declares that God brings into being the possibility of faith, John Wesley might argue that Rudolf Bultmann assumes that man's will has its own innate power and ability in and of itself to turn from sin and to choose righteousness. John Wesley, and classical Protestants such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, would hold that, although God provided the possibility for faith, man's own natural will is hopelessly bound in sin and has no innate power to choose Jesus Christ without God's direct, supernatural empowerment of the will. On the basis of Rudolf Bultmann's view, would John Wesley classify him as an advocate of "works" righteousness?

Therewith, Rudolf Bultmann's argument that "election" only occurs in the act of faith would be contested by John Wesley. Side stepping the issue of who had been elected, classical theologians would agree at least that "election" had already occurred in the counsel of God "before the foundation of the world". Rudolf Bultmann would reject this "general" proposition as invalid. Nonetheless, John Wesley would concur with Rudolf Bultmann that personal awareness of "election" only occurs in faith. Rudolf Bultmann's apt reminder that speculation about personal election is not a possibility is a caution against fatalism; yet, John Wesley would not want to go as far as the implications of Rudolf Bultmann's thinking take us. Rudolf Bultmann will not allow that a man of faith may have a state of consciousness that he is chosen of God and saved. Neither, we infer, will he allow that man may have a state of awareness that he is not chosen even where there is conscious refusal to believe. Thus, for Rudolf Bultmann there can never be any self-conscious or

empirical distinction between believers and non-believers and no awareness in man or God that a man's destiny is in harmony or discord with God's eternal purpose or plan. His proposition not only renders meaningless the New Testament distinction between "Christian" and "pagan" but also the appellation "Christian". Would anyone know to whom the term "Christian" applies, even in a specific situation? Be that as it may, the question is relevant: if one neglects this gospel, what is lost? If one accepts it, what is gained?

PAULINE FAITH IN CONTRAST TO GNOSTICISM

According to Rudolf Bultmann, Paul does not as fully explicate the meaning of faith in contrast to Gnosticism as in contrast to Judaism; nonetheless, the eschatological attitude of πίστis is not left in doubt.¹⁴⁷

Rudolf Bultmann states that if faith as the Christian state of existence means the "no longer" in contrast to Judaism, then, in contrast to Gnosticism, faith describes the "not yet".¹⁴⁸ The justified man is constantly striving for fulfillment rather than having reached it as in Gnostic γνῶσις. Because faith's knowledge about the new life is concerned with the future, ἐλπίς stands beside πίστis.¹⁴⁹ Existence in faith as described in Philippians 3:12-14 is a paradoxical existence within the historical life which is movement between the "no longer" and the "not yet". It is "no longer" in the sense that the decision of faith has discarded the past of self-confidence. Still, faith remembers that the past is always with us and constantly threatens us. The decision of faith does not remove man from historical existence. The decision must be continually worked out afresh and made again and again. Paul's "forgetting" does not mean putting the past out of one's mind. Rather, the past is ever present in the state of having been vanquished and must be held down so that one does not let one's self be caught by it again.¹⁵⁰

Rudolf Bultmann explains that Paul is aware that Christians still struggle against the flesh (Romans 8:12 f). Although the flesh is crucified, it is constantly living and must be constantly mortified. Paul knows of the conflict of the old and new man which Martin Luther describes by the formula "simul justus, simul peccator". For man always remains a sinner and is always justified. Here, says Rudolf Bultmann, it is necessary to speak of "walking on a knife edge".¹⁵¹ The formula does not mean that the sin cancelled out through belief continually needs to be overcome. It means that the righteousness is not my own but is reckoned as aliena justitia. I the sinner stand in God's presence precisely as I have emerged from my past.¹⁵² The new being has overcome the old existence only in such a manner that it still imports the old into every conceivable present situation. Therefore, one is never holy -- even when one ceases to transgress any commandments. As Rudolf Bultmann says, "I live always and only by forgiving grace".¹⁵³

πίστις is also the "not yet" in that it is not an exchange of an old possession (old existence) for a new possession at one's own disposal. In a comment which is equally applicable to Paul's debate with the Jews over righteousness by faith, Rudolf Bultmann affirms that πίστις for the Christian is a sure hope and man's awareness that he is under divine grace. This χάρις is not in the Gnostic sense a divine δύναμις which is poured into man demonstrably transforming his nature and imbuing him with special qualities.¹⁵⁴ Faith is "not yet" in just the sense that it surrenders the self-security which imagines it can control its own existence.¹⁵⁵ For in actual fact, the giving up of a supposed security-producing possession precludes the taking of a new possession. The change from the former to the present means to renounce every desire to possess in utter devotion to the grace of God. "Not yet" refers to man in his historical life on earth where it cannot be said that he "has apprehended". "Nevertheless already" speaks of man, in so far as it is true for him, as having "been apprehended by Christ Jesus".¹⁵⁶

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Leaving now the subject of "faith" in the relation to Judaism and Gnosticism, we turn to Rudolf Bultmann's treatment of Paul's description of the new life in relation to the "Spirit". Antithetical to the "flesh" (the determination of life by what is on hand and the condition in which man can become an object), the "Spirit" is the determination of life not by what is on hand and disposable but by what is invisible. According to Rudolf Bultmann, Paul takes over the current, popular image of the Spirit with its idea of "miracle" as a power that determines man's existence.¹⁵⁷ Paul "radicalizes" this image by showing that phenomena of the "miraculous" sphere of the "on-hand" (cf. Heidegger's "present at-hand") are ambiguous. In contrast, the genuine miracle is that which transforms man in his entire existence and attests itself in the concrete expressions of a believer's life. Therefore, the Spirit is the "how", the determination of the new life. On the one hand, Paul speaks of the Spirit as the gift of the last days given to the man of faith. On the other hand, he says it must be laid hold of in faith and must prove itself in the concrete way one leads his life.¹⁵⁸ Rudolf Bultmann says that the Spirit is the determination of heart and conscience, of walking and striving, of joy and of love (e.g. Romans 5:5; Galatians 4:6).¹⁵⁹

How can those who believe be certain that in their action and in their refraining from action the Spirit is made manifest? This cannot be determined through the "gifts" Χαρίσματα present in the community because there is no usable criterion to determine their divine character. The only possible way one in the community may know himself to be a believer is the way of life called love.¹⁶⁰

Since faith is the laying hold of the Spirit, Paul does not refer faith to the Spirit's activity but, conversely, the reception of the Spirit to faith or baptism. Rudolf Bultmann says, "In so far, however, as the resolve of faith must maintain itself as the determination of one's entire life, a life in the Spirit and

a life in faith are one and the same."¹⁶¹ Communion with the Lord is nothing other than being determined by the Spirit, for both denote the new eschatological mode of existence in which the faithful stand.

Furthermore, both designate the "freedom" of the faithful (e.g. II Corinthians 3:17). "Freedom from sin" (Romans 6:18) does not indicate a sinless state but the freedom for God's claim which is opened up through forgiveness. "Freedom" is also "freedom from the law" (e.g. Galatians 2:4; Romans 6:14), "freedom from men" and their standards (e.g. I Corinthians 7a:21, 9:1) and, lastly, "freedom from death" (Romans 8:2).¹⁶²

Faith sees in the struggle between the Spirit and the flesh that the Spirit is the victor in spite of man's defeat.¹⁶³ The believer who puts his hope in God is lifted above even life and death themselves.¹⁶⁴ However, he can never boast that he has salvation as a possession but can only boast of the cross of Christ and of his own nothingness. In proving to Judaism that faith has righteousness because it has life, it is not a state in which dying or weakness has ceased. These only make the believer aware that all is provisional and he has freedom in being at God's disposal. However, his freedom should not be used to indulge his whims because that would force him back into slavery.

If everything worldly is for the believer radically indifferent, this indifference immediately disappears before the question of the individual's concrete responsibility (e.g. I Corinthians 6:12; 8:1ff). Faith does not make the faithful unfit for life or tear him out of his relations with his fellows. He rejoices with those who rejoice and weeps with those who weep. He has a part in the world's life though in the peculiar distance of "as though not" and without being inwardly bound to anything that is passing away (I Corinthians 7:29-31).¹⁶⁵

In all of the faithful's conduct within the world he is guided by "love". That man is a καὶνὴ κτίσις and has eschatological existence is manifested by the fact that belief is effective in love.¹⁶⁶ His self-surrender to God's forgiving grace means that the man who no longer wills to be for

himself exists for others. The liberating love of God has been opened up to him in the cross and therefore the love of Christ compels him to serve his fellow men.¹⁶⁷ Service to Christ realizes itself in actual life as service to the neighbor. Such service is the fulfillment of the "law of Christ". It is "love", the fulfillment of the law (Galatians 5:14; Romans 13: 8ff). This love is that in which faith manifests itself as the determination of one's life (Galatians 5:6) and in which knowledge has the criterion of its genuineness (I Corinthians 8:1ff).¹⁶⁸ The decision of love is not a second decision alongside faith, but it is faith.¹⁶⁹ It is the love that is higher than all the other Spirit-wrought phenomena (I Corinthians 13:1ff); the love which in the new creation becomes a reality and, consequently, which never ends (I Corinthians 13:8ff).

Rudolf Bultmann avows that for one who stands in love an "ethic" is no longer necessary, even though Paul directs believers to their responsibility and to what they have to do.¹⁷⁰ Love is not an ethical or timeless principle which gives specific answers to the question "what should I do?"¹⁷¹

This life in freedom and love in the Spirit is rooted in faith and is only understandable to those for whom the "glory of God" is the final motive and the final goal.¹⁷²

Rudolf Bultmann summarizes Paul's account of man's existence under faith in the following way. Faith in the salvation act means that God accepts the believer as he is. In accepting him as he is, God accepts him as the new person he is. Thusly, Paul knows contrary to Judaism that the believer as a result of God's unmerited grace is "righteous", not merely treated as if he were.¹⁷³

Faith is genuine "trust", the complete surrender of oneself to God. Albeit, it is also "knowledge", it is not speculation but the believer understanding himself anew as one who has been placed in a new situation.

As a unity of obedience, confession and hope, of fear and trust, faith in its new self-understanding is not "the once for all resolve to join the Christian religion or a once accepted world-view". Faith may begin with a foundational

resolve and confession, but faithful existence is not the establishment of a simple state or the natural development which is begun. Faith can only be the "obedience of faith that is always new".¹⁷⁴ Then, faith "abides" (I Corinthians 13:13) in the sense that the Christian can imagine no future in which his self-understanding is not based in God's saving act. To be "in Christ" means a life-long crucifixion with him such that his life and sufferings are at work in the ministry and sufferings of the man of faith.¹⁷⁵ Since there are various levels of faith, this communion is never completed but is a constant striving forward. No longer controlled by the will to be oneself, this communion is the determination of a life that is free from the past and open for the future.¹⁷⁶

In calling attention to faith's nature as both an act of believing as well as a "state" of being a believer, Rudolf Bultmann shows himself to be in harmony with John Wesley and Martin Luther. Moreover, he is not at odds with John Wesley or Martin Luther in ^{taking the} ~~a~~ view that the state of being a believer is not a static condition. Rudolf Bultmann does diverge, however, from John Wesley and Martin Luther regarding the nature of this state. When Rudolf Bultmann states that faith is not an act done once for all, John Wesley -- most Protestants at their best -- would certainly concur that faith is not something done in a moment which may slip to the background and be forgotten, or be put aside, or upon which one may live indefinitely into the future with no further involvement. Nonetheless, John Wesley departs from Rudolf Bultmann in insisting that the initial act of believing does have the character of an "act done once for all". The faith-decision is a decisive, conscious turning-point in time which begins and ends in that moment. The faith-decision is the threshold of a permanent beginning of the end of the old existence and the commencement of an entirely new existence, the "new creation". However, he does not shy away from speaking of the old and new existence. ^{Rudolf Bultmann} ~~he~~ agrees with Martin Luther that new existence does not produce a real, qualitative change in man's nature (his "image") as John Wesley held. However, Martin

Luther in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann did hold that the initial moment of faith introduced man into a new existence which by God's power and working would progress toward God's goal of the mortification of the "old man".¹⁷⁷

Rudolf Bultmann assumes that the idea of the Holy Spirit being poured into a man and transforming him is in the first instance a Gnostic teaching rather than an originally Pauline one.¹⁷⁸ This contradicts John Wesley's teaching that faith is a state that is begun in which development toward a goal occurs. Rudolf Bultmann would argue that assertion viewed faith from the perspective of sinful man, from the perspective of traditional Greek ontology. According to Rudolf Bultmann's historical and philosophical presuppositions, history and, therefore, man's personal existence, is not progressing toward a goal. In order for man to know this to be the case, he would have to step outside his own existence and already know the end of history. Twinned with this assumption is Rudolf Bultmann's denial that a personal, transcendent and immanent God is orchestrating such progress in history which is marching toward His revealed goal.

Be that as it may, John Wesley would not concede that his understanding of the state of faith excludes Rudolf Bultmann's legitimate, formal emphasis that faith must be constantly laid hold of and realized anew. Albeit, John Wesley did not teach that a decision of faith, like the original decision to accept the proclamation, was made anew in every moment. He, nonetheless, like Rudolf Bultmann, emphasized the immediate currency of faith in linking acceptance with God in the present "now" with now believing in Christ with a loving and obedient heart.¹⁷⁹

Rudolf Bultmann asserts that faith cannot be affirmed of any man and is unverifiable *in* the man of faith. Not even the man of faith himself, so to speak, nor those who observe him know whether or not he has faith.

On the one hand, he asserts that there is no qualitative change or characteristic about a man of faith that signifies him to be a man of faith. This assertion is quite antithetical to John Wesley who vigorously maintained

the state of justification brought particular, immediate "fruits" and "marks" which necessarily would be "felt".¹⁸⁰ Contrarily, for Rudolf Bultmann faith can never be identified with any spiritual situation. Similarly, he says he resists identifying faith with any human experience in order to avoid bringing Christianity under attack. One must continually doubt his experience rather than put his trust in it. Repeating Karl Barth who quoted Martin Luther, Rudolf Bultmann affirms, "We only believe that we believe."¹⁸¹

Rudolf Bultmann would reject John Wesley's affirmation that the supernatural, personal God through the Holy Spirit testifies directly to the believer's justification in the man's inner being. What seems especially to repel Rudolf Bultmann is not the notion of faith being an experience of God but the kind of God and experience to which the classical theologian refers. Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of faith seems to comprehend some kind of personal experience.¹⁸² Though finding Rudolf Otto's analysis of religious consciousness somewhat analogous to his formulation, he seems to talk all around the word "experience" in speaking of the "crisis of decision" and the being encountered by judgement and grace in which man knows that he is confronted by the outside authority. While Rudolf Bultmann seems reluctant to declare it, one is drawn to conclude that he is referring to some kind of individual personal experience.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, Rudolf Bultmann does make it clear that we are continually to doubt our experience and not to put our trust in it.

Rudolf Bultmann's thesis will not allow one to assert a positive, causal relationship between faith and a personal, moral transformation and societal renovation. According to his thesis, it is unfounded to expect a man to be a "better" man or a "better" neighbour because he has faith. He prefers to say that it will make him no worse.¹⁸⁴ In the end, there is no ethical or moral criterion -- except everyday norms accepted in a culture at a particular time -- by which to judge if Christian faith does for man what Rudolf Bultmann claims it does -- that is, making man no less fit for life than his peers. In the

final analysis, what does faith add to the human equation? If the criterion for being fit for life is formed on the basis of what can be expected of everyday, "average" people, is not the existentialist ethos of overcoming the "everyday" in its concrete life defeated by allowing its concrete life to be brought to the bar of the "everyday"?

One may well query how much practical value a faith has which can only be doubted by the man who "experiences" it and which cannot be known to have a commendable, observable effect on the believer and on the society in which he lives.¹⁸⁵

The ambiguity into which Rudolf Bultmann plunges "love" is perhaps a testimony to his own reluctance to completely let go of the traditional teaching of faith and love in pursuing the implications of his radical program of "faith". He explains there is no visible, empirical manifestation of faith which may be causally linked with faith. Love cannot be considered a "mark" or a "sign" of faith as it is for John Wesley.

Nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann affirms that the man prior to faith who once existed for himself now in faith exists for others. In fact, the love of Christ compels him to serve his fellow men. Rudolf Bultmann is stating that when faith occurs, love occurs. He says they occur together and are not causally related. They are, in fact, one and the same thing; yet, on the other hand, he explicates their relation in terms which denote causal relations. He says "belief is affective in love" (He does not refrain from giving the impression that faith is logically prior to love.).¹⁸⁶

As Martin Luther before him, Rudolf Bultmann equates faith and love. The implication is that love is the obverse of faith. In other words, faith is one side of the coin in which man no longer wills for himself while love is the other side of the coin in which man now exists for others. Is "existing for others" necessarily the same as loving and serving our fellow man? Further, does not Rudolf Bultmann's "existing for others" presuppose the ethical principle "love your neighbor"?

On the one hand, Rudolf Bultmann talks in terms of faith allowing man a possibility of love which was not available to him prior to faith. He states that the man outside of faith does know about love and fulfills the demand of love here and there.¹⁸⁷ The difference is that in the man of faith love is the "dominant and sustaining force of his life".¹⁸⁸ Thus, the difference between the man prior to faith and the man under faith is a matter of the "how" and manner of love rather than the kind of love. Nevertheless, even if there is only a difference in the "how" of love, one would expect this to enhance one's life in a manifest way (if only to the man himself).

How is love the "sustaining force of his life" according to Rudolf Bultmann? One must be careful in unpacking his meaning. Assuming an existential ethos, he is suggesting that the man of faith is totally involved in his love whereas the man prior to faith cannot be. He is not without a valuable point here. Nevertheless, Rudolf Bultmann accepts that the man outside of faith can fulfill the demand of love. If this is the case, in order to fulfill the demand of love, man must be fulfilling it in the existential manner (being totally involved in his love), or how else can he be referred to as fulfilling the demand of love? But how can the man outside of faith fulfill the demand of love until he has the existentiell "experience" of faith? Rudolf Bultmann is vague as to the real difference faith makes in the expression of love.

Because the content of love is the same prior to faith as in faith, Rudolf Bultmann is consistent in saying that love in faith is in no sense indicative of the reality of faith. For love is love, whether prior to faith or in faith. Alas, how do we recognize love anyway -- outside or in faith? He states we do not need to know how to recognize it. He says everybody knows what love is and what is required in any given situation. Therefore, love's meaning seems to be whatever anyone determines it means for him in any given situation. This is the reason everyone knows what it means. If it is true that everyone knows what love is to them in any given situation, it may also be true that no

one knows what love is to another in any given situation. Rudolf Bultmann throughout his theological enterprise is careful to rescue the meaning of the terms he employs from the "everydayness" of the "they". When it comes to the term "love", does he not seem content to let the common, everyday usage suffice?

This means there is no standard, common-denominator criterion without whose presence, in a given situation at least, love could be judged to be a reality. Thus, there is no way for one to determine whether or not Rudolf Bultmann's thesis that faith releases love is sound.¹⁸⁹

Finally, if faith is, as Rudolf Bultmann makes it out to be, a fleeting, momentary event which must be doubted time and time again, no-one can assuredly know and claim to have faith. If none know they have faith, does anyone -- the theologian himself -- really know if the reflections being presented as theological reflections (which by definition must originate in faith) are indeed theological reflections of faith? Is Rudolf Bultmann's assertive and pronunciative theologizing, which everywhere presents itself as being certain of itself (e.g., that God cannot be...), commensurate with such a tentative faith?¹⁹⁰

Since faith is strictly personal in its ramifications and its justification is utterly transcendent, Rudolf Bultmann allows no criteria to authenticate his claim.

"BELIEVE" IN JOHN

Rudolf Bultmann gives heedful attention to the profile of faith in the Johannine documents. According to him, John was neither of the Pauline school nor influenced by him. Nevertheless, he was an original writer in whom there is a "deep relatedness in substance that exists between John and Paul".¹⁹¹ By inference we may conclude that while neither Jesus, Paul, nor John were influenced by one another, they all bore close similarity to one another in their basic thought.

The demand to believe is a constant theme throughout the whole Johannine corpus. Rather than using the noun πίστις, John frequently utilizes the verb πιστεύειν, particularly in the common Christian sense of acceptance of the Christian message concerning Jesus.¹⁹² The object of faith can be designated by any of the terms in the three-term equation: Jesus = his word = his "works". All three are identical. "Believe him" (simple dative) and "believe in him" are synonymous for John.¹⁹³ Jesus goes beyond the Synoptics and unites the preacher with what is being proclaimed. As was said in the chapter on grace, the proclaimer became the proclaimed. As Paul recognized, Jesus wants to demonstrate that in the kerygma the Proclaimer who is being preached is Himself encountered, present, and acting (speaking).¹⁹⁴ As Rudolf Bultmann says, "What the kerygma preaches as something that has happened -- God's action -- itself possesses the nature of the word."¹⁹⁵ Both "to hear" the Word and "to see" Jesus' works are equated with "to believe" in that each verb refers to recognizing Jesus as God's saving deed.¹⁹⁶

Rudolf Bultmann also points out that John (similar to his conclusion regarding Paul) links "sight" with "knowing". Whereas γινώσκειν appears to spring from πιστεύειν at times, and whereas πιστεύειν sometimes from γινώσκειν, therefore, Rudolf Bultmann concludes "faith" and "knowing" cannot be distinguished as two different acts or stages such that one must first recognize Jesus and then believe.¹⁹⁷ Faith is inseparable from knowledge so that it is only faith itself that knows.¹⁹⁸

While John, as Paul, knows that faith which is directed to Jesus' word (or Himself) is the only way to salvation, he does not engage the Jews in a polemic over "works of the Law". He focuses on the right conception of salvation rather than the way of salvation as Paul. Paul characterizes the way of salvation as δικαιοσύνη while John describes salvation's conception as ζωή.

While there is apparent agreement between the Christian preaching of "life" and the world's desire for "life" as its salvation, John's purpose is to expose the real difference. Contrary to the Jews Paul faced, the world would believe that Jesus is the Son of God if John forwarded evidence of his authenticity according to its criteria(6:30).¹⁹⁹

In accordance with Rudolf Bultmann, John claims that the world has no idea of true "life". In fact, the demand of faith demands that the world surrender its previous understanding with its standards and opinions and discard its whole structure of presumptuous security. This demand of faith, which is in inner unity with Paul's concept of faith, basically means to renounce the world; i.e., to surrender oneself and live by the strength of the invisible and uncontrollable.²⁰⁰

"Believing" which means "renunciation" is not an activity of this world but a happening rooted in the 'Beyond'. It is an act or gift of God himself.²⁰¹ The faith which is "renunciation" has as its object something incredible to the intelligence of the world. Faith is "the overcoming of the offense" that life and salvation encounter man only in the human word of Jesus addressed to him.²⁰²

Furthermore, faith as "removal out of this world" is not a dualistic world-view, a philosophy of life which arises from renouncing the world and which flies into speculative thought or devout silence. Since faith understands that God's working takes place only in faith, its acceptance of the testimony is to itself the proof of its own assurance. Rudolf Bultmann qualifies assurance by stating that it is not any sort of guarantee or experience within this world.²⁰³ Hence, the revelation that "the light came into the world" is the scandal. The invisible becomes the visible which, according to the world's standards, it neither could nor should become.²⁰⁴ Rudolf Bultmann says, "Faith is not flight from the world nor asceticism, but desecularization in the sense of a smashing of all human standards and evaluations."²⁰⁵

John's conception of "removal out of the world" is not the being taken out of the world but renouncing evil. "World" for John is not, as in Gnosticism, a natural, foreign entity encircling man with the compulsion of fate.²⁰⁶ Rather it is the "...historical power constituted by man who has rebelled against God".²⁰⁷ Revelation is the scandal because it calls the world into question. Rudolf Bultmann states, "As an overcoming of the offense and as a decision against the world faith is desecularization, transition into eschatological existence." The believer is still "in the world" but no longer "of the world".²⁰⁸

The "glory" which believers possess consists of "knowledge" and "freedom". "To know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ" is only a believing knowledge in which the possessor allows himself to be determined by what he knows. The "freedom" promised to the possessor of faith is freedom from the world, freedom from sham "reality" (16:33), and seductiveness.

Freedom from the world is also "freedom from sin". "Freedom from sin" is not the endowment of a new nature to which sinlessness belongs (Perhaps an allusion to Wesleyan teaching?). Faith is the overcoming of the world which must be done over and over again.²⁰⁹

How does John's concept of faith compare to Paul's concept? According to Rudolf Bultmann, both hold faith is the surrender of reliance on one's own power which means that righteousness is not attained by one's own strength. Both concur that faith is not a good work nor unbelief an evil one, for both are decisions. Indeed, they are in agreement that faith has the quality of obedience.²¹⁰

While Paul appreciates the problem of the "indicative and imperative and their relation to each other and to Christian conduct", he does not treat it in connection with the sinning of believers which factually takes place again and again. He expects the rapidly approaching end of the world. Rudolf Bultmann affirms John distinguishes himself in that "to him eschatology as a time-perspective has dropped out because he has radically transposed eschatological occurrence into the present".²¹¹ John sees the "paradoxical

tension" between the declaration of not sinning (1 John 3:9) and the confession of sin (1 John 1:8).²¹²

A further distinction between John and Paul appears when one turns to the anti-gnostic character of John's concept of faith. In John's mind the Jews are not prevented from believing because they rely on the law of Moses and their works as Paul maintains, but because they are ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. Gnosticism which is trying to reside within Christianity is a particular expression of this worldliness. While Rudolf Bultmann asserts Gnosticism knows John's terminology and even largely influenced John's language, he says it is wrong to interpret John according to Gnostic meaning. John engages himself with Gnosticism in order to distinguish himself from it.²¹³

The anti-Gnostic bias in John's concept of faith is illustrated in his exposition of the relation of the "Already of faith to its Not yet". Rudolf Bultmann insists that for John, faith, which is complete renunciation, has life "already" but not as a possession or quality as in Gnosticism. Believers must not imagine themselves removed from life in this world but must maintain their connection with the word. "God's revelation is present in the world 'only' as the word which challenges the world," states Rudolf Bultmann. Because of this, faith is temporary by nature.²¹⁴

Rudolf Bultmann claims that, according to John, the believer cannot realize the possibility of his being removed out of the world in such a manner as to make it actual to himself as condition. However, removal out of the world can be manifested in conduct which is generally called, "keeping the commandments" or keeping the word given by Jesus. The unity of believing and acting is in harmony with the substance of the commandments in as much as the action which they require is nothing else than love (John 13:34, 15:12).²¹⁵ In genuine faith, the foundation for all one's future conduct (which is to be conduct in love) is provided.²¹⁶

JOHANNINE FAITH AS ESCHATOLOGICAL EXISTENCE

Rudolf Bultmann submits that John portrays eschatological existence by saying that believers "are in the Revealer or he in them."²¹⁷ The statement in John 15:4, "Abide in me, and I (shall abide) in you", is not speaking of a realistic parousia of Jesus or a direct or mystical relationship to Him but the believer's eschatological existence withdrawn from the world.

Rudolf Bultmann affirms that John characterizes eschatological existence by various traditional terms. Εἰρήνη means "well-being". Χαρά, "joy", is different from every other joy of this world. Neither "well-being" nor "joy" are realized in the external conditions of life or in some state of mind.²¹⁸ Faith is true faith only when it "abides", when it constantly brings about desecularization. As far as a relationship to God is mediated to the believer by the Revealer, the relationship is one of "prayer". Prayer denotes both that the believer is united with God and is separated from him. It does not signify the mythological notion of Jesus as an intercessor. From I John 5:15, Rudolf Bultmann concludes regarding prayer requests and their answers that "no matter what may happen, that which does happen is God's answer to the prayer".²¹⁹

Rudolf Bultmann concludes that the final criterion of eschatological existence for John is the "possession of the Spirit" (I John 3:34). For John, the Spirit is neither the power that causes their miracles nor the power or norm of Christian conduct. "It is the power within the Church which brings forth both knowledge and the proclamation of the Word", affirms Rudolf Bultmann.²²⁰ The Scripture John 15:26 means the knowledge given by the spirit is to have its activity in the proclamation, in preaching. In and through the preaching, the eschatological occurrence which happened in Jesus' coming and going is to continue to take place in preaching.²²¹

One may conclude after having reviewed Rudolf Bultmann's presentation of Jesus', Paul's, and John's understanding of "faith" that he discovers substantial agreement between the three. Insofar as this is true, Rudolf

Bultmann upholds the traditional, Christian conclusion. Although Paul designates faith "obedience", and John denotes it "renunciation", they both understand the demand of faith essentially in the same way.²²² Since there is basic agreement between Paul and John regarding "faith", my critique and evaluation of Rudolf Bultmann's formulation of "faith" in Paul may be allowed essentially to apply also to John.

FAITH IN THE DEVELOPING CHURCH

In considering "the developing Church's" understanding of faith, Rudolf Bultmann concludes that its literature (which includes the pastoral epistles and Hebrews) adds nothing constructive to the concept of faith. It actually represents the beginning of its corruption. Lacking the controlling criteria of Pauline authorship, the polemic of justification by faith, he argues "the developing Church's" literature cannot mean by ΠΙΣΤΙΣ (ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ) "obedience". Rather, faith acquires the meaning of "right belief", "right doctrine".²²³

CRISIS IN BELIEF

Rudolf Bultmann takes up several concerns that affect belief and will complete the discussion of faith. One issue concerns belief in the supramundane reality, the transcendent, when the transcendent has been called into question.²²⁴ He is particularly interested in his claim that scientific observation (differentiated from natural science) induces a crisis in belief.²²⁵ He readily qualifies his assertion by explaining that belief "never" has to struggle against scientific findings to understand the purpose of "being" only against natural science's possible claims as a Weltanschauung. Natural science and, for that matter, "science of history" (which is the science that deals critically with the New Testament) confronts a person with the question of whether or not he wants to view existence in the light of the reality available to sensual observation or in the light of the reality of the "moment"

with its demands.²²⁶ Regardless of its results, man is told that God has acted such that the word of divine judgement and forgiveness which now confronts the man is authenticated. "Science of history" cannot confirm or reject this claim because the claim is beyond the sphere of historical observation.

Thus, the "science of history" becomes belief's "crisis" by virtue only of this stumbling-block, that the word of the Christian message asserts that it is the authentic Word of God. Belief enters a "crisis" also when it is confused with a Weltanschauung or with a religious frame of mind (such as mysticism). Herein, man demands verification by criteria which do not exist. Thus, man demonstrates that his belief in himself holds sway and, therefore, it means a crisis for belief in God.²²⁷ In describing the "crisis of belief", Rudolf Bultmann tries to remove belief from the crisis in which he perceives many in our scientific culture find it; specifically, that belief's object is threatened by science's findings and results. One appreciates Rudolf Bultmann's robust appeal for a science whose understanding does not automatically preclude theology. Moreover, one welcomes his affirmation that theology does not fear science's results. However, in trying to dispel the crisis of belief, has not he consequently put the historical scientist in a dilemma? The scientist, when confronted by the proclamation, is asked to abandon what is by nature his obligation; namely, to submit what he encounters to critical evaluation. Is not Rudolf Bultmann suggesting that the scientist do what he himself says a scientist may not do when involved in critical thinking: passively "surrender to the spell of another's mind"?²²⁸

For a more in depth discussion of the related subject of the relation between "knowledge" (philosophy) and "faith" (theology), "unbelieving" and "believing" existence, please see the Appendix.

TWO FAITHS

Clarifying the relation between the "faith" which is believed" (fides quae creditur) and the "faith by which one believes" (fides qua creditur) is another

issue important to Rudolf Bultmann's concept of faith. He finds previous formulations inadequate and offers his solution. He states, in "genuine orthodoxy", theology was the science of faith in that the faith which one believes was a rationally systematized body of revealed "truths" derived from Scriptural ideas presented for acceptance to the "faith by which one believes". Because these rational "truths" which describe not God but doctrines about him are contrary to reason, therefore, the "faith by which one believes" would relate to doctrines and be impossible.²²⁹

While Rudolf Bultmann appreciates the theological reaction to this above orthodox formulation, he explains that theology, since Schleiermacher, went to the opposite, absurd extreme of holding that "religious faith precedes theology and produces it" (Wendland's words). In contrast to orthodoxy, he asserts that this new theology investigates the "faith by which one believes" and by separating it from theology loses the "faith which is believed".²³⁰ This renders theological reflection meaningless. In this new theology, faith is accepted beforehand and its reality demonstrated before the question of truth is ever raised and considered. As he aptly summarizes it, liberalism loses what faith believes in and orthodoxy loses the faith by which one believes.²³¹

Rudolf Bultmann desires to correct the imbalance by contending that the "faith by which one believes" is what it is only in relation to its object, "the faith which is believed".²³² He encapsulates his position when he states, "What God is cannot be understood unless what faith is is also understood -- and conversely. Theology, therefore, is the science of God in that it is at the same time the science of faith -- and conversely. Thus, the object of theology is faith itself in unity with what it believes in."²³³ Since faith includes theology, theology is the scientific elaboration of what is already present in simple faith.²³⁴

In the issues of the "crisis of belief" and the relation between the two kinds of faith, Rudolf Bultmann's existential-ontological presupposition is the hinge upon which his qualification of faith turns. According to him, the

scientist, the orthodox, and even the "new theology" theologians go wrong in their assumption of the Greek "subject-object" ontology which tries to study doctrine from a neutral observer's standpoint. Whether Scriptural assertions or religious faith, these researchers according to Rudolf Bultmann see these as historical manifestations in this visible world which in some way reveal the object of faith.²³⁵ Rudolf Bultmann argues that God is not within man's control so that man cannot control the impulse of faith from which theological thinking derives.²³⁶ Although he agrees with "new theology" in its assertion that theological thinking follows faith, he argues "new theology" loses "the faith which is believed" because it does not regard Scripture as the proclaimed Word which demands "faith's obedience". "New theology" neglects the truth that the proclamation presents Jesus as a historical fact through which our own historical existence is decisively conditioned. In other words, religious faith does not arise without being mediated through and grounded in its object, the Word of proclamation.²³⁷

SUMMARY WITH COMMENTS

For Rudolf Bultmann, faith is the hinge upon which turns the reality of true, human existence and the new self-understanding. It is the crux of genuine, knowledge of God and presupposition for the formulation of theology. Without faith, even the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has no meaning or importance.

In deriving his understanding of faith from the New Testament, Rudolf Bultmann accepts Herrmann Gunkel's characterization of Christianity as a syncretistic religion.²³⁸ In keeping with this, Rudolf Bultmann analyzes the New Testament with a relativistic, historical-critical, existential-ontological philosophy which likewise assumes that the writers and composers of the New Testament documents were historical critics themselves. These writers took from a received message that which suited their own particular needs and wrenched it into a new message which they desired to communicate. Rudolf

Bultmann's methodological assumption has an essential influence on his findings regarding faith.²³⁹

Rudolf Bultmann's methodological assumption poses several concerns. Why did a New Testament writer have to try to twist the Gospel "message" into terms which were intellectually intelligible to certain cultural audiences with their particular mental outlook when Rudolf Bultmann maintains that the Gospel message does not convey an intellectual communication but a demand which makes a man insecure? Why do they so carefully craft their intellectual form, choosing certain words rather than other words, when it is not the meaning of the individual words per se which is intended to be conveyed but a "demand"? Further, why must certain thought complexes and conceptions be chosen in order to convey "demand" rather than others? If particular words must be chosen as opposed to other words, then does not one assume that there is interest in the particular content which an individual word has to convey and not just its communication of "demand"? However, I cannot see that he addresses adequately or resolves the uneasy tension between assuming at once that particular words convey a common, objective meaning which correlate to the reality to which they refer and that particular words are empty vehicles given a suitable meaning by a particular hearer. Rudolf Bultmann assumes the particular Christian "message" is given a meaning out of the common, existentiell understanding (one from existence qualified by faith's "resolve") of each writer. What endures every changeable situation is a common, existential understanding of man. The common, existential understanding of man uses words in particular circumstances to express the existentiell understanding.²⁴⁰

While there is truth to the proposition that meaning is projected onto a "message" by the hearer, Rudolf Bultmann's radical adherence to his philosophy has the effect of shutting man off from any possibility of receiving meaning from an outside, objective message, much less a revelatory communication from a supernatural and immanent personal God. For many,

Rudolf Bultmann's formulation could easily degenerate into anything from a fanatical and arrogant, Nietzschean bigotry to a highly subjective self-delusion.

Rudolf Bultmann's assumption transfers any permanent meaning from outside man to man himself. Man's existential understanding is the permanent fixture in a world of flux. Whereas in classical Christian faith, permanent meaning is ultimately theocentric and fixed in eternity in the personal God; with Rudolf Bultmann, permanent meaning is denied a personal God and made anthropocentric by residing in man's existential understanding. One may interpret Rudolf Bultmann as betraying his relativistic assumption by giving man an "eternal" meaning by means of a relative, philosophical construct which arose out of a particular, historical situation. He argues as one who acknowledges he has a philosophical presupposition and then promptly forgets the fact. His presupposition ceases to be a presupposition in his mind and soon becomes what is. One must conclude that this philosophy was the more elemental, permanent, and controlling truth to the hearers and interpreters than the truth of the good news of Jesus Christ. This contradicts the claims of the New Testament writers taken in their literal sense.

.... The distinctions which Rudolf Bultmann draws between the various phrases of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ with and without prepositions seems forced and overwrought. Through his "history of religions" spectacles, he reads each variation as having a particular use and meaning for each religious respondent. One has difficulty in understanding why one should think that ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΕΙΣ ("believe in") is the unique New Testament term for faith when Rudolf Bultmann asserts that what the New Testament really wants to communicate by ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΕΙΣ is ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ὅτι ("believe that"). If the New Testament wanted to accent the meaning "believe that", it certainly had at its disposal the most likely candidate ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ὅτι to convey such a meaning. Moreover, to construe ΕΙΣ as "that is" is out of its character, making one search long and hard for parallel uses in the New

Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΕΙΣ as "believe that" seems controlled by his conception of the object which is believed. Though the object may be variously expressed as "the Gospel" or "Jesus Christ", the latter must be interpreted in the light of the former rather than vice versa. In Rudolf Bultmann's mind, the object cannot refer to the person Jesus Christ because such a person no longer exists. Since he no longer exists as a Thou, we can only conceive of a reference to "Jesus Christ" as a reference to the proclamation about him. Hence, one cannot construe a personal relationship to Christ in the New Testament to mean a relationship of trust between the person Jesus Christ and his disciple.

Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Karl Barth would protest that without the living and present person Jesus Christ there could be no proclamation in the Now. Not only does the proclamation refer to Him, but it is also spoken and made valid and effective by Him.

In connection with this idea of a personal relationship, one observes that Rudolf Bultmann's existentialist approach which desires to personalize man interprets faith in a way that actually may de-personalize him. In Rudolf Bultmann's description, the man of faith is still alone in the universe and is disconnected from any personal ties to a personal, living Creator -- Father and Redeemer. The ultimate relation of man as portrayed in Rudolf Bultmann's formulation of faith is one in which man "relates" to some anonymous, impersonal "God" of which precious little can be known. Consequently, the relationship of faith which is man's most crucial and fundamental relationship is robbed of its character of personality and "humanness" when it is removed from its reference to its personal origins.

Rudolf Bultmann may answer that the existential understanding actually personalizes man because it removes man from the illusion that he is related to a greater Thou and restores him to himself. Certainly, in the final analysis, the existential conception of the relationship to God speaks of man

being referred back to himself. One may find it hard to appreciate the view that the Scriptural, Christian solution for the situation of an already alienated man, who is radically befuddled by his aloneness in the universe, lies ultimately in the individual man relating to himself.

The idea that "obedience" is linked with "faith" is agreed. However, Rudolf Bultmann's evidence for arguing "obedience" is primarily "faith", and "faith" is "obedience", is weak and unconvincing. In interpreting "faith" as "obedience", he divests ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ of its traditionally understood New Testament meaning of "trust"; in its place, he fills it with the content usually associated lexically with the word ὑπακοή. Why were the cognates of ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ seized upon to express "obedience" when the other terms, principally, ὑπακοή (in both the Septuagint and the New Testament), but also πείθομαι and περιπαρχέω, were the readily available Greek words with the dominate and established meaning of "obedience"?²⁴²

Rudolf Bultmann's theology of faith implicitly communicates with Martin Luther's. Rudolf Bultmann depicts faith in the same form as Martin Luther in holding that faith is an act of believing in a moment as well as a state of being. For both, faith is hearing the proclamation. Further, both understand that when faith occurs, love occurs. However, the construction they each place upon faith's arrangement differs as widely as the vantage point of each. Martin Luther's theology is rooted in the so-called Western, Greek ontological tradition and Rudolf Bultmann's presupposes the existential-ontological analysis. While Martin Luther sees faith in its primary sense as personal, trusting reliance in the living person, Jesus Christ, and his work, Rudolf Bultmann sees it as submission to an outside, overmastering, authority. In the moment of faith, both agree that man is "righteous". Rudolf Bultmann repudiates that a consequent, qualitative change occurs in man while Martin Luther's position is ambiguous. Martin Luther conceives of this momentary act as the birth of a state in which a regenerating, linear development in man progresses toward a goal of perfection in God. Consistent with this

conception is Martin Luther's teaching that empirical "signs" (fruit) which are manifested as the battle against sin, such as "good works" and love, are causally linked to faith. Since for Rudolf Bultmann justification is only present in the 'Beyond', there can be no causal relation between faith and following occurrences in this visible world. Nevertheless, Rudolf Bultmann is unwilling to follow the logical extension of this proposition that faith may just as readily lead to wickedness as uprightness. One feels that Rudolf Bultmann cannot entirely escape from the moorings of historical Christianity when he concedes that faith makes a man no worse than his fellow.²⁴³

Finally, Rudolf Bultmann claims that there are no visible indications of love. He insists that everybody knows already what love is. If this is true, then it is also true no one knows what love is to another in any given situation. Of course, since Rudolf Bultmann admits no empirical criteria of the presence or absence of love, his assertion that everybody knows what love is cannot be determined. Rudolf Bultmann's argument will hardly allow for a love that is pitched any higher than whatever is its lowest common denominator. Throughout his theological enterprise, Rudolf Bultmann is at pains to redeem the meaning of the terms he employs from the "everydayness" of the "they". When it comes to the term "love", he seems content to let the common everyday usage suffice. In contrast, while classical Christianity can offer no assured proofs of the presence of love, it does claim criteria which at least show up its absence.

In Rudolf Bultmann's discussion of the issue of science and belief, he affirms that any field of study must reckon firstly with its pre-scientific relation to human existence.²⁴⁴ Though he does not greatly enlarge upon it, he extends this exhortation to include also natural science. Although he touches on the subject of empirical science and theology in his essay "Theology as Science" (1941), he does not adequately work out a reconciliation between his existential assumption and the scientific, empirical method which assumes the "old-styled" ontological philosophy.²⁴⁵ He urges that it is not the

results but scientific observation itself which provokes a crisis in belief. Can we separate the results from the method? If the framework of scientific observation in its traditional understanding were altered in its philosophy to accommodate the existential concern, could we still legitimately speak of it as empirical science? Would we still obtain the same results as before? Rudolf Bultmann accepts the results of New Testament scholars who achieved their results through the Weltanschauung of scientific observation. If a philosophical and methodological framework stands condemned, how can we be sure that the results it achieves should not also be condemned? Moreover, does he not consistently condemn the faulty results and conclusions wrought in a theology derived from the vantage point of scientific observation?

For Rudolf Bultmann, faith is said to arise from out of a pre-understanding of philosophy and the scientific understanding; that is, if both are understood in terms compatible with existential-ontological analysis. In order for one to accept Rudolf Bultmann's argument, one must firstly have faith in "scientific", existential-ontological analysis before one can have faith in the Gospel. Unfortunately, Rudolf Bultmann fails to avoid falling victim to holding "two faiths" -- a fault for which he roundly castigates traditional theology. In fact, in the light of his factual teaching, we may conclude that "faith alone" in the proclamation --without the existential pre-understanding -- is insufficient for "justification".

Finally, Rudolf Bultmann's ultimate "reason" for asserting the absolute necessity of the acceptance of the proclamation boils down to this: this syntactical arrangement of words called the "proclamation" is incumbent upon man for absolutely no reason at all, save these words say so to the person who hears them. The "proclamation" neither corresponds to an imperatively authoritative, personal, referent -- human or super-human -- nor does it claim to justify itself on the basis of any philosophical, scientific, logical, psychological, spiritual, or practical reason.

Rudolf Bultmann affirms that radical obedience exists when the whole man stands behind what he does. Man is to eschew the blind, formal obedience which offers no reason for the obedience but that the authority says to obey. Is not Rudolf Bultmann calling for the very obedience which he rebuffs? Can the whole man be said to stand behind what a man does when his mind (reason) is excluded from participation? Does he not contradict himself by asserting that man must obey and accept a proclamation simply on the basis that it says so?

1. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 314.
2. Ibid., p 270.
3. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 34-110.
4. Indeed, in his linguistic study in Kittel there is no consideration of Jesus' or the synoptics' use of the word per se. Why this is omitted is neither stated nor immediately apparent. That there is relevant material to be analyzed is acknowledged by Hatch who says that πίστις and its cognates are by no means rare in the synoptic record of Jesus' sayings. Joachim Jeremias notes that in the synoptic gospels, ἐλθέπιστες, ἐλθοπιστία, and ἄπιστος all occur exclusively on the lips of Jesus. Likewise, so do πίστις with one and πιστεύειν with very few exceptions. Rudolf Bultmann's reticence may stem from an even more radical concern than the one expressed by Hatch who, though he states he utilizes the synoptic accounts to speak of Jesus' mission, recognizes the intricate critical hazards involved in doing so. W. H. P. Hatch, The Pauline Idea of Faith in its Relation to Jewish and Hellenistic Religion. Harvard Theological Studies II, Edited for the Faculty of Divinity in Harvard University by George G. Moore, James H. Ropes, and Kirsopp Lake (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969), pp. 21-27; Joachim Jeremias, New Testament Theology Part One: The Proclamation of Jesus, The New Testament Library, Advisory Eds., Alan Richardson, C.F.D.Moule, C.F.Evans, and Floyd V. Filson (London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 165.
5. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 189. As Jeremias warns, the fact that the words πίστις and πιστεύειν occur more rarely in the synoptic sayings of Jesus than Paul should not lead one to the false conclusion that faith had only a peripheral significance for Jesus. Jeremias submits that Jesus' whole message is one simple appeal to trust in his word and in God's grace. Jeremias, New Testament Theology, p. 165.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., pp. 190, 156f.
8. Ibid., p. 73.
9. Ibid., pp. 64-67.
10. Ibid., pp. 74f.
11. Ibid., p. 91
12. Ibid., pp. 75ff.
13. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 77.
14. George Foot Moore, Judaism: In the First Centuries of the Christian Era. The Age of the Tannaim, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946), vol. 2, p. 77.
15. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 77.
16. Ibid., pp. 82f.

17. Ibid., pp. 83f.
18. Ibid., p. 88.
19. Ibid., pp. 85, 87f.
20. Ibid., p. 207.
21. Ibid., p. 209.
22. Bultmann says, "Whoever then becomes a new man through forgiveness is reborn to obedience"; Ibid., pp. 201, 211.
23. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 39, 43.
24. Ibid., p. 44.
25. Ibid., p. 47, 51f.
26. Rudolf Bultmann's assertion that "faith" and "trust" are kept separate pivots on the assumption that ἐ' μιν and πιστεύειν do not mean "trust". The relation of πιστεύειν and παραβίβω does not appear to commentators to be an issue which can be exploited. Dodd only mentions that πιστεύειν stems from the same root as πέποι and can mean "to trust". Warfield states that ἐ' μιν is rarely translated as trust by any other word than πιστεύειν. Both Dodd and Warfield mention that Proverbs 26:25 is an exception in which πιστός is used. It seems doubtful that Rudolf Bultmann's distinction between πιστεύειν and παραβίβω casts convincing, corroborative weight behind his main argument that πιστεύειν predominantly means "to obey" rather than "to trust". Dodd, Bible and Greeks, p. 66; B. B. Warfield Biblical Foundations, Selected Theological Studies (London: The Tyndale Press, 1958) p. 338.
27. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 63, 89.
28. Ibid., p. 91f.
29. Rudolf Bultmann accepts that εἰς is to be equated with ὅτι on the grounds that, particularly in John, εἰς and ὅτι alternate constantly with this same essential meaning: πιστάμεν ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐπέβηκεν καὶ ἀνέστη, (1 Thessalonians 4:14; Romans 10:9; John 20:31) or ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός. {John 20:31}; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 58.
30. Ibid., pp. 57f. Rudolf Bultmann's rendering of πιστεύειν εἰς according to the meaning of πιστεύειν ὅτι appears to be influenced by his prior assumption that Jesus cannot be "believed in" but only "believed that". Why should we accept that ὅτι influences εἰς when πιστεύειν εἰς is, according to Rudolf Bultmann's assertion, the New Testament's distinctive term?
31. Ibid., pp. 62-82.
32. Ibid., p. 62.
33. Ibid., pp. 68f.

34. As Romans 10:14-17 indicates, its primary meaning is "the acceptance of the kerygma of Christ". The object of the faith is variously stated as the "kerygma" (1 Corinthians 2:21), the "gospel" (1 Corinthians 15:2), the "testimony" (II Thessalonians 1:10), "obedience" (Romans 10:16), and the "logos" (Acts 4:4). Ibid., p. 69.
35. Ibid., pp. 73.
36. For the relationship to God he refers to Romans 9:33, 10:11; I Peter 2:6; I Clement 34:4. For the relationship to Jesus he refers to 1 Timothy 1:16.
37. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 75.
38. Rudolf Bultmann's point seems to be that in the Old Testament, Word and history are separate. History in this case is "what the nation has experienced". In the Old Testament, Bultmann holds that the individual has faith in so far as it is directed towards the future of the nation. A full-orbed sense of trust as concerns the individual's fate is missing. As an example, Bultmann construes Abraham's faith in Genesis 15:6 as that which does not concern his personal fate but the fate of Israel. Contrarily, he holds that in the New Testament, Word and history are one. History herein is the personal experience of a hearer when he is confronted by the proclamation of the Word.

In the Old Testament, the godly man believes in God by reason of what He does. Because His actions are plain to see in the national history, he does not "believe" the actions themselves. However, in the New Testament, what God does is precisely what is to be "believed" for the part which is exposed (hence disqualified from belief) is the life and death of Jesus. What is not seen is only made plain by the preaching. In the New Testament, God's activity is demonstrated in God's eschatological action which brings history to an end. While the godly man of the Old Testament is still expecting further activity from God, the godly man of the New Testament is expecting only what God has already done to be disclosed fully. Ibid., 44f, 83; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 311.
39. We also recall that Bultmann in his Theology of the New Testament claims that Hellenistic Christianity is "the historical presupposition for Paul's theology". Rudolf Bultmann does not clarify for us the relationship between "Hellenistic Christianity" and the "common Christian usage". However, both designations seem to refer to the same Christian church. Both designations are said to consist of an Old Testament and Jewish strain and both hold that the specifically Christian conception of faith is "the acceptance of the kerygma".
40. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 314.
41. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 86f; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 74, 141; Bultmann, Essays, p. 12; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 174, 236, 245. Cf. Bultmann's declaration here with his earlier statement that in the common Christian use πίστις was a special expression for the religious attitude as it was in the Old Testament and Judaistic heritage. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 62. What is the distinction between, on the one hand, "spiritual" and "human" attitude and, on the other hand, a "religious" attitude?

42. Romans 1:15, 10:3; II Corinthians 10:5f; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 329; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 87; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 141.
43. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 74, 139, 141; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 317; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 87.
44. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 317f.
45. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 87.
46. Moreover, the confession of faith in the fact of salvation which is made in baptism (the pre-condition of faith) is an act of obedience. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 198f.
47. Ibid., p. 201.
48. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 199.
49. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 87.
50. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 140.
51. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 314; Bultmann, Essays, pp. 36, 59, 174f; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 140.
52. Bultmann, Essays, p. 173.
53. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 281; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 228; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 149.
54. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 170ff.
55. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 81.
56. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 55f.
57. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 171-74.
58. Ibid., p. 173.
59. Ibid., p. 174.
60. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 140.
61. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 173ff.
62. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 88.
63. Ibid.
64. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 174ff.
65. He similarly relates Romans 15:18, "what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles", with I Thessalonians 1:8, "your faith in God has gone forth everywhere". Also, he translates Romans 10:3 as "they did not submit to (=obey) God's righteousness"; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 314.

66. Furthermore, he comments that Paul is speaking of faith in II Corinthians 9:13 when he says the Corinthians "will glorify God by your obedience in acknowledging the gospel of Christ". He speculates that whereas Paul uses the word "faith" in II Corinthians 10:15ff, we would expect the word "obedience"; Ibid., p. 315.
67. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 64f; Bultmann, Essays, p. 175; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 323.
68. Ibid., Bultmann, Essays, pp. 59, 175.
69. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 199.
70. Bultmann, Essays, p. 175; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 323.
71. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 323.
72. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 136f.
73. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 55-57.
74. Ibid., pp. 56f.
75. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 318.
76. Bultmann, Essays, p. 7,
77. Ibid., p. 15 ; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 225.
78. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 233.
79. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 209f.
80. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 88f.
81. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, p. 50.
82. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 142; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 324.
83. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 142.
84. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 57, 221, 225.
85. Ibid., p. 221.
86. Bultmann, Essays, p. 64.
87. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 50.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid., p. 253.
90. Ibid., p. 246.
91. Ibid., p. 50.
92. Ibid.

93. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 89f; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 324.
94. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith p. 90; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 220.
95. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, pp. 275-277.
96. Ibid., p. 176.
97. Ibid., p. 177; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 63.
98. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, p. 176.
99. For instance, he relates Romans 15:18 and I Thessalonians 1:8 and also insists that Romans 1:8 and Romans 16:19 are united here in Romans 1:5.
100. The report of a congregation's faith or obedience in the world as expressed in Romans 1:18 and Romans 16:9 does not express the purpose of apostleship per se. The purpose of apostleship is fulfilled when those in the world have faith and are obedient.

Just the same, Cranfield and Whiteley acknowledge these verses demonstrate the parallel (Cranfield says "equivalence") between "faith" and "obedience". C.E.B. Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, The International Critical Commentary, gen. eds. J. A. Emerton and C. E. B. Cranfield, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T.& T. Clark, 1985) vol. 1, p. 66; D. E. H. Whiteley, The Theology of St. Paul (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), p. 162.
101. Whiteley remarks that the evidence Bultmann adduces hardly justifies such a sweeping assertion. Whiteley, Theology of Paul, p. 162. For comments on faith and obedience in Romans 1:5, see: John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, trans. and ed., The Revd. John Owen (Edinburgh: Printed for Calvin Translation Society, 1849), p. 8; Barrett, Romans, p. 21; Cranfield, Romans, vol. 1, p.66f.
102. See: Chambers 20th Century Dictionary, s.v. "obedience", "obey"; Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, s.v. "ὡμακοῖν" and "ὡμακοῦν".
103. Interestingly, Catholics will agree with Bultmann inasmuch as he maintains that the faith by which we are justified is "obedience." John Henry Newman proffers that by our obedience we are acceptable to God. Of course, serious differences surface between the two when one probes into the meaning of obedience for each. John Henry Newman's characterization of obedience as our being enabled to fulfill the Law for our justification diametrically opposes Rudolf Bultmann's conception of obedience as renunciation of the Law and man's old self-understanding. John Henry Newman would hold that obedience is subjection to the commandments of God and Rudolf Bultmann would urge that it is subjection to the demand of God. John Henry Newman, Lectures on Justification, 2nd ed. (London: J.G.F. & J. Rivington, 1840), pp. 36, 38, 59.

104. John Calvin calls faith man's answer to God's call of the Gospel; Martin Luther held that justification was received by faith which is an effectual hearing of the word of God. Karl Barth states that the Gospel demands decision and is the submissive acceptance of Jesus Christ; Hans Küng states that the one who believes is the one who submits to the justification of God; William Sanday and Arthur Headlam see it as the act of assent which appropriates the Gospel. C. K. Barrett states man believes when he accepts the power of God at work in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; Cranfield calls it man's appropriate response to the message. Michel views it as the reception of the Christian proclamation and saving faith. Calvin, Romans, p. 8; Cranfield, Romans, vol. 1, p. 89; Barrett, Romans, p. 28; Barth, Romans, p. 39 and Küng, Justification, pp. 85, 252, 259; Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 232; Luther, Commentary to Galatians, p. 185; The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. Colin Brown, trans. with additions and revisions, from the German Theologisches Begriffslexikon Zum Neuen Testament, ed. Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther, and Hans Bietenhard, 3 vols. (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1975), vol. 1, s.v. "Faith" by O. Michel, pp. 599, 601; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 33; Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, 3 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1984), vol. 2, part III: Existence and the Christ, p. 179.
105. Ibid.
106. The contemporary commentator Michel seems to be sympathetic to Rudolf Bultmann's view that faith relates simply to the Christian proclamation. New International Dictionary, s.v. "Faith" by O. Michel, pp. 599, 601.
107. See Warfield's remark in Warfield, Biblical Foundations, p. 330. Martin Luther would speak for John Wesley in avowing that not only was Christ the "object" of faith but he is himself present in faith. Karl Barth states that for Paul, in Galatians, what is at stake regarding the Gospel is not merely of the Gospel or the Law, faith or works, himself or false teachers, but Christ or no Christ. He concurs with Martin Luther that Christ is both the object and origin of faith. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 231; Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. IV, part one, p. 642; Küng, Justification, p. 84.
108. Barrett, Cranfield, and Sanday and Headlam advocate that verse 14b is best translated "to hear some one preaching" rather than "to hear of some one...." Barrett, Romans, p. 204; either Cranfield, Romans, 2, p. 262, or C. E. B Cranfield, Romans: A Shorter Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1985), p. 262; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 292.
109. Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, s.v. "ὑπακούω", "ὑπακούω".
110. John Wesley, Explanatory Notes, p. 478; Marcus Barth, Justification: Pauline Texts Interpreted in the Light of the Old and New Testaments, trans. A. M. Woodruff III (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1971), p. 66; Cranfield, Romans, vol. 1, pp. 224, 231, 250; Dodd, Romans, p. 17.
111. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 80, 137.
112. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 91.

113. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 137.
114. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp 202-03.
115. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 138.
116. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 91.
117. Bultmann, Essays, p. 60.
118. Ibid., p. 208.
119. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 93.
120. Bultmann, Essays, p. 169.
121. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 61, 63.
122. Moreover, he casts aside Mundle's assumption that a certain measure of independent activity is involved in faith. No, protests Rudolf Bultmann, the motion of the will which expresses a "work" is that which is involved in an accomplishment in which the will asserts but does not surrender itself. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 315.
123. Bultmann, Essays, p. 169.
124. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 330; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 245.
125. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 276.
126. Bultmann, Essays, p. 169.
127. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 276.
128. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 245; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 329.
129. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 329.
130. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 62.
131. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 329.
132. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 63.
133. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 330.
134. Bultmann, Essays, p. 180.
135. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 92.
136. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 315.
137. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 176f.
138. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 63, 144; Bultmann, Essays, p. 175.

139. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 62f; Bultmann Essays, p. 7.
140. Bultmann, Essays, p. 177.
141. Ibid., p. 7.
142. Bultmann, Essays, p. 175.
143. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 144.
144. Ibid., p. 65.
145. Outside of faith, no one can say "I don't believe, therefore I'm not chosen."; Bultmann, Essays, pp. 175f.
146. Ibid., pp. 178f.
147. Faith as an eschatological attitude is not as in Philo a disposition (an attitude of mind, a διὰθεσις of the soul (an ἀρετή, a virtue) or a perfected state of the soul as the reward for the contest itself. Neither is μυστική a mysticism in which the soul can free itself from the world. Mysticism seeks God beyond the given. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 316; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 53, 94; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 87; Bultmann, Essays, p. 9; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 51.
148. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 96.
149. Ibid., p. 94f.
150. Ibid., pp. 96f; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 322.
151. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 51.
152. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 61ff.
153. Ibid., pp. 63f.
154. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 64; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 87.
155. "Fear", a constitutive element in faith's structure like "hope", is the believer's knowledge of his own insignificance. "Fear" destroys false security; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 321; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 95f.
156. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 97; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 322.
157. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 143.
158. Ibid.
159. Ibid.
160. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 79.

161. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 144.
162. Ibid.
163. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 74.
164. Ibid., pp. 144f.
165. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 199.
166. Bultmann, Essays, p. 112.
167. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 199.
168. Ibid., p. 145.
169. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 181. Count Zinzendorf also claims that faith is love in his Nine Lectures, p. 34.
170. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 145.
171. Ibid., p. 222.
172. Ibid., p. 146.
173. Ibid., p. 138.
174. Paul expresses this when he exhorts his hearers to examine themselves and stand fast in faith (e.g. I Corinthians 10:12). Paul also states that faith can be weak or strong and that the man of faith still stands in a life in which it is necessary to judge and act (e.g. Romans 14:1f; 15:13f).
175. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 142.
176. Ibid., p. 143.
177. Martin Luther's classic dictum states that man is simul justus et peccator. By this Martin Luther meant that man by faith enters a condition which lasts throughout his life in which man is at once a righteous man and a sinner. He is in a state of tension in which he as a man of faith has Christ working against him as a sinner. This struggle continues throughout the life of the man of faith as the old man is progressively crucified. Althaus, Martin Luther, pp. 236, 242-45.
178. Rudolf Bultmann rejects Luther's point that sin and forgiveness alternate in human life. Ibid., pp. 242-45; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 51.
179. Martin Luther held that the Christian daily renews his surrender of himself in faith to God's totally merciful judgement of life and death as a daily new reception of Judgement and of the grace of justification. In fact, Rudolf Bultmann's emphasis has overtones of Martin Luther's view which Rudolf Bultmann has adapted to his existentialist understanding of history and personal existence. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 244; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 263.

180. See above, Chapter Four: "Saving Faith as a Gift/Decision and as a State" in the Section One. Martin Luther's view which fairly represents classical Protestantism, held that there is a basis upon which one can determine whether genuine faith is present or not. The hallmark of the certainty of our genuine faith for us and others is the conflict against sin (the "work of the new obedience"). Companion signs to the conflict against sin are the signs of "good works" and love; Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 246f.
181. As Rudolf Bultmann says, "The 'new man' is always the man of the 'Beyond', whose identity with the man of this world can only be believed in faith." Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, p. 51.
182. He seems to find some analogy between Rudolf Otto's idea of the inner relatedness of the moments of dread and fascination and his assertion that the nature of faith encompasses both despair and awareness of God, judgement and grace. Rudolf Bultmann pinpoints despair as the realization of fleeing from God and grace as the awareness of God when flight has ended. He states they are not two successive experiences. Although he states they both belong together, he does not go further to say they are one "experience". At the same time, he does not explicitly deny that they are an "experience".
183. John Kent likens it to Schleiermacher's "feeling of absolute dependence". John H.S.Kent, Tutorial, University of Bristol, May 1986.
184. Perhaps the implication is that even this is an advancement over the results of some former old-styled formulations of faith. Moreover, it is an acknowledgement that we cannot expect a man of faith to be anything different from any other human being. Rudolf Bultmann would perhaps think Christian faith does as much for man's existence as any other religious, ethical or humanitarian endeavor.
185. Certainly, Rudolf Bultmann's conception of faith would make for a body of believers who would be hesitant to judge and discipline one another. However, this effect might be lost on a body of "believers" who could not determine whether or not, or to what degree they were a body of "believers". An ambiguity which pastors recognize has some truth. Since no individual would be sure if they were a Christian because they could not be sure if they had faith, and since the presence of charismatic "fruit" and "good works" would be irrelevant, a situation would prevail in which few if any dare call themselves Christians (a situation which Kierkegaard would welcome). Nevertheless, those who did could do so without any challenge from others. This would leave a situation in which none or all can be Christians and no one can determine which is the case. Contrarily, Paul in the verses of Romans to which Rudolf Bultmann has referred (Romans 1:8; 16:19) recognizes the presence of faith and obedience in the believers of the Roman church (Paul even mentions the names of individuals in Romans 16). Not only does he recognize it, but also acknowledges that it is known in all the world.
186. Bultmann, Essays, p. 112. Faith does not make the faithful unfit in his relations with others; love is that in which faith manifests itself.
187. *Ibid.*, p. 303.

188. Ibid.
189. Jesus, when speaking of love, said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another...." (John 13:35). According to him, his love is demonstrative and when exercised by men manifests its identity with Jesus.

Since Paul, as Rudolf Bultmann tells us, is in basic agreement with Jesus, there is no reason to expect him to diverge from Jesus at this point. The logic of the "If ... then" clause which Jesus proposes to his disciples -- "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" -- demands that if love be present, then his commandments must necessarily be kept.
190. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, p. 63.
191. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 9.
192. The content of the message is variously communicated; that is, by an ὅτι-----clause ("to believe that ..."); by πιστεύειν εἰς----- ("believe in..."); or just πιστεύειν used absolutely. According to Rudolf Bultmann, it is peculiar to John that πιστεύειν with the dative (translated "believe him" not "believe in him" (5:38) can be used interchangeably with πιστεύειν εἰς----- . Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 97f; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 8.
193. Rudolf Bultmann explains that it is not as though one first had to believe and trust Jesus in order that one might believe in him. He states one "ought to believe him, and in so trusting him is in fact believing in him; one can do neither without doing both". Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 71.
194. In Theology, vol. 2, p. 71; Bultmann leaves "himself" (in reference to Jesus) in small case. However, in his monograph Faith, p. 98, he capitalizes "Himself". Perhaps this is a difference in the translator's preference. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 71; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 98.
195. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 98.
196. John's description of Jesus as the "Logos" manifests the conception that God's word and action are unity. Since God's action is His word, "hearing" in the sense of "hearing-and-keeping" is equated with πιστεύειν----- . Furthermore, just as "hear" and "believe" can be united, so also "see" and "believe" can be joined. "Seeing" refers to the "sight", the inner perception, which recognizes the Son of God in the Incarnate One. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, pp. 71f; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 98.
197. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, pp. 73f; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 108.
198. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 74.
199. Ibid., p. 75; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 99f.
200. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 75; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 100; Bultmann Existence and Faith, p. 255.

201. Rudolf Bultmann, The Johannine Epistles: A Commentary on the Johannine Epistles, trans. R. Philip O'Hara with Lane C. McGaughy and Robert W. Funk, ed. Robert W. Funk (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973) s.v. "6:45".
202. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 75; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 102.
203. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, pp. 77f.
204. This is apparent in the ascriptions to Jesus, of which the following are samples: God's son came in the flesh whose parents are known; He is the One who breaks the law, who declares himself equal with God, et cetera.
205. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 76; See also, Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 103.
206. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 104.
207. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 76; Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 104.
208. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 78.
209. Ibid., pp. 78f.
210. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, p. 104.
211. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 79.
212. Ibid., p. 79f.
213. Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 105f.
214. Ibid., pp. 106f. Rudolf Bultmann affirms that for John the act of believing does not introduce the believer into the state of being removed from the world but is an act of removal from the world which must be accomplished constantly anew. "Believing must become a continuing in his word," he urges.
215. Ibid., p. 109; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, 80f.
216. John sets forth the logical relationship between divine love and the believer's love. Faith knows Jesus as the revealer of divine love. To believe is to receive his love from which loving feelings flow. Because of the love Jesus has shown his own, the believer is under obligation to "love one another" (John 15:11-17). Bultmann and Weiser, Faith, pp. 109f; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, p. 81.
217. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, pp. 84f.
218. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, 82f.
219. Ibid., p. 87.
220. Ibid., p. 88.
221. Ibid., p. 90.

222. However, it is of interest that he arrives at this conclusion from the not-so-traditional assumptions of a relativistic, historical critic and a Hegelian philosophy of "thesis/antithesis/synthesis".
223. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 2, pp. 135, 183, 211.
224. Bultmann, Essays, p. 1.
225. Ibid., pp. 16f.
226. Ibid., p. 17.
227. Ibid., pp. 18ff.
228. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 144.
229. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 117f.
230. Ibid., p. 118.
231. Rudolf Bultmann, New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings, selected, edited, and translated by Schubert M. Ogden (London: SCM Press, 1984), p. 53.
232. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 119.
233. Bultmann, New Testament and Mythology, p. 54. See also, Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 120.
234. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 120.
235. Ibid., p. 122.
236. Ibid., pp. 121f.
237. Ibid., pp. 137f.
238. Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, p. 230
239. This method was evidenced in Jesus' use of the Old Testament to teach radical obedience; in the three-stage development of faith in Hellenism from an idea of faith as "fides qua creditus" to that of simply "Christianity"; in Paul's polemic with the Jews regarding works of the law; and in John addressing himself to the world's concept of "life".
240. This is why Jesus', Paul's, and John's words regarding faith's understanding could differ but their understanding was substantially the same.
241. Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, s.v. "Εἰς". By the fact that the New Testament pairs πρὸς with other prepositions such as ἐν ("in") and ἐπὶ ("upon") which indicate the meaning "in" or "on", give strength to the position that the New Testament uses Εἰς to mean "in" or "into".
242. New Bible Dictionary, s.v. "Obedience" by J. I. Packer.

243. As there is a correlation for Martin Luther between faith and love in the heart and outward life, he held that only in faith can man genuinely fulfill the commandments and the law of love. Rudolf Bultmann contends that persons outside of faith may fulfill the demand of God but only those in faith make love the "sustaining force" of their life.
244. Bultmann, New Testament and Mythology, p. 49.
245. Ibid., pp. 45-67.

SECTION THREE

AN EVALUATION

CHAPTER ONE

JUSTIFICATION

THE PLACE OF JUSTIFICATION

No Christian doctrine was more foundational and integral to both John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's theological proposals than the doctrine of "justification by faith". Both identify the doctrine and their explanation of it as originating with the Apostle Paul.¹ Thus, they show themselves conscious and appreciative debtors to the Reformation tradition.² Justification was for both the pivotal "gate" or "presupposition" of salvation.³

However, their contrasting, formal understandings of justification and salvation are indicative of substantial differences in their theologies. For Rudolf Bultmann, as for Martin Luther, justification ("rightwising") is not only the "presupposition" of salvation but is also, in essence, salvation.⁴ Justification for both Martin Luther and Rudolf Bultmann is the apex of religion in this life.

Though John Wesley claimed that no doctrine was superior to justification, he, as John Calvin, distinguished it from sanctification, asserting that the doctrine of sanctification had equal place with justification.⁵ Therefore, "salvation", encompassing both "justification" and resulting "sanctification", was full salvation. Though John Wesley, as commentators observe, held that love was the "end" for which faith was the "means", he with remarkable consistency throughout his life, insisted on both side by side, "faith working by (thru) love". On the face of it, his balance is hard to deny. While retaining a Protestant framework, it may redress an imbalance of solifidianism of which Catholics as well as many modern Protestants would accuse historic Protestantism.⁶ Suffice it to say, the fact that John Wesley promotes such an emphasis and Rudolf Bultmann rejects it expresses well the value and significance each attaches to the soteriological effects of justification.

Nevertheless, although John Wesley in his emphasis on both justification and sanctification was not unlike historical Protestant tributaries such as German Pietism and English Arminian-Calvinist Puritanism, Rudolf Bultmann, without a doubt, embodies the unqualified Protestantism of Martin Luther in the supreme place he gives to justification by faith.

The two theologians have an all-controlling, theological preoccupation with "present" salvation, or existence in the "now". For them salvation was not an indifferent matter which had relevancy only to another life which could be conveniently postponed indefinitely and relegated to some undecided future. Salvation was an urgent matter of the utmost relevancy for the immediate now of man's existence.

Of course, for John Wesley, "present salvation" was set into the context of the Divine, magisterial scheme for man and the cosmos for all the ages. God's architectonic plan was not myth but was being realized in "world-history"⁷ in man's realm and the "what" of nature and chronological events. Beginning with the creation and the literal Fall of Man, God's plan of salvation unfolded in the "exodus" and the giving of the Law, reached a climax in the Cross and Resurrection, proceeded in the salvation of individuals and society, and anticipated consummation in the final, eschatological redemption. Thus, the salvation which man experienced in the present was set into a context causally and historically related to that which preceded and that which would follow. The progression of salvation in the individual's life tended to mirror this history of salvation.⁸

In contrast, for Rudolf Bultmann present salvation is the only salvation. Present salvation is the eschatological, future salvation already come now in the present in man's individual, existential existence which puts an end to and overcomes his past "world history". Therefore, for Rudolf Bultmann present salvation is not an event of "world history" which could be one event among others in a procession of causally connected, world-historical events. Present salvation, which was outside of world-history and which, contrary to

John Wesley's understanding, was not one specific example or movement in an over-arching cosmic schema of salvation, was a possibility of human existence in any "now".

THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION

GRACE

In evaluating John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's understandings of "justification", let us first consider justification's "ground" or "causes". The Council of Trent and seventeenth-century English Puritans such as John Goodwin and Richard Baxter followed Thomas Aquinas' form by dividing justification's cause into numerous sub-causes. John Wesley was essentially interested only in the two-fold division of "meritorious" and "formal" causes. He shows he was not without Pietist and Latitudinarian influences in that he was interested in intellectual formulations only as they were deemed to have immediate relevance to practical religious matters (salvation of the individual's soul).

Although Rudolf Bultmann is diffident toward the scholastic terms which John Wesley uses, he accepts in essence that the two "causes" or conditions, "grace" ("meritorious") and "faith", are necessary for justification. Yet, occasionally John Wesley traced the cause back to the "free love" or "tender mercy" ("efficient" cause) inherent in the Divine Being, God Himself. For Rudolf Bultmann, the cause of justification could not be located in God or in His inner motivation. Justification could not be set forth in rational propositions which could connect it in a chain of causation from God to this visible world. If he appears even more than John Wesley to eschew this kind of theological intellectualizing, it is mainly theological ratiocinating in reference to "the Beyond" which uses the method and terms of the "old ontology" of "this world" that he rejects.

The achievement of justification is attributed to the "grace of God" by both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann.⁹ Both relate this grace to Jesus' death on

the cross. Both commonly use extra-biblical interpretive phrases ("the merits of Christ" (John Wesley) and "the salvation-occurrence" (Rudolf Bultmann)) to signify Jesus Christ's death as grace.

CHRISTOLOGY AND SOTERIOLOGY

John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's conception of the historical person Jesus is very relevant to how they interpret the nature of this grace as the ground for justification. Neither John Wesley nor Rudolf Bultmann is interested in studying christology for its own sake, but they deal with it as it touches soteriological interest.¹⁰ Juxtaposing their views pits the once dominant, classical, Christian conception of Jesus represented by John Wesley against the radical, critical, skeptical view of Jesus held by Rudolf Bultmann. Though built on formulations once deemed heterodox and heretical, on the strength of research and new, modern theories developed in the nineteenth century and after, Rudolf Bultmann's view had by his day been received by many into the Christian, scholarly world.¹¹

For John Wesley the ground of justification was truly christocentric. It was attributable not simply to an event but supremely to the Person Jesus Christ who gave the event its significance. Taking the Scriptural attestations to Jesus in a literal fashion, John Wesley would have found it inconceivable to divorce the literal Person Jesus Christ, in His exalted reality, from His death on the cross. The ground of justification lay not only in an impersonal, outward event but also in the Person Jesus Christ who had provided the particular event and invested it with its meaning and efficacy. It was as a result of His atoning death on Golgotha that Jesus Himself, the bodily resurrected, transcendent and immanent Son of God, the Lord of Lords, mediated His immediate, personal, saving presence and power to recipients.¹²

Quite to the contrary, based upon the assumption that Paul was uninterested in the person of Jesus except in the naked facts that He lived and died, Rudolf Bultmann rejects the relevancy of the historical person Jesus

and the facts of His ministry, message, personality, or character to the salvation-occurrence. The Scriptural ascriptions and attestations to Jesus of Nazareth were problematic and, in any case, were not to be read as John Wesley read them: as objective, analytical propositions setting forth the nature of the historical Jesus as He was in Himself. The descriptive phrases did not convey literal meaning but the Christian community's existential-ontological understanding which was seen as a "summons" to decision.

The question of the nature of Jesus Christ and His relation to the salvation occurrence is one which has concerned modern critics of Rudolf Bultmann's theology. Karl Barth, who represents the viewpoint which is essentially compatible with what I believe is John Wesley's understanding sketched above, epitomized the issue by asking whether Rudolf Bultmann meant to emphasize the Christ event as "the Christ event" or "the Christ event". Karl Barth contended that the christological nature of Jesus Christ is important to the salvation occurrence and must have independent significance in and of itself and be prior to soteriological concerns which are derivatives of it.

Schubert Ogden is concerned that critics have failed to understand rightly that Rudolf Bultmann does argue for the necessity of the historical Jesus for existentiell faith. However, he does concede that critics such as Karl Barth are right in their determination that Rudolf Bultmann does not adequately state the "objective" reality of the event of Jesus Christ.¹³

Though Schubert Ogden is right to correct critics' false notions regarding Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the place of the historical Jesus for faith, nevertheless, the point remains that the full-orbed, historical, pre-existent and glorified person of Jesus Christ as John Wesley and classical Christianity conceived Him was to Rudolf Bultmann irrelevant to the salvation occurrence. Certainly, for him Christ as God's act precedes faith, but only in the sense that one is addressed by the proclamation. Theological explication of Christ (christology) must follow faith.¹⁴

Consequently, the Jesus John Wesley claimed to know was radically divergent from the Jesus Rudolf Bultmann could not know. For John Wesley, part and parcel with faith in Christ's merits was faith in Jesus Christ's person. That Jesus ever demanded such faith Rudolf Bultmann makes a point of refuting.

For John Wesley, one of the two-pronged conditions that had to be met for the effecting of justification was the completely obedient and sinless life of Jesus. Of course, for Rudolf Bultmann that Jesus lived such a sinless life could never be established. In John Wesley's reckoning, if Jesus did not live such a sinless life, then the very atonement itself was jeopardized. For Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus did not say he forgave sin or granted pardon and did not see in himself "the occurrence"; that is, as Johannes Weiss had asserted, Jesus was not actually the coming, visible Messiah in chronological-historical terms.

Contrarily, John Wesley assumes that Jesus is the visible, historical Messiah; that He came into this world expressly for the purpose of forgiving sins; and that pardon was made effectual through His death.

Though the whole issue of christology and the larger issue of biblical criticism are complex and beyond the scope of this *thesis*, the simple pre-conceptions of these two theologians are hugely indicative of their fundamental differences. Rudolf Bultmann, though living through a groundbreaking epoch in biblical studies and theology and in spite of the discoveries of the religionsgeschichtliche Schule, when all is sifted and weighed, does not have at his disposal such indisputable scientific data as to necessitate a scholar having to concede Rudolf Bultmann's position. Rudolf Bultmann approaches the Scriptures with a fundamental pre-conception of doubt that the descriptions of this Jesus could be rational, propositional descriptions which attest literal truths. John Wesley, on the other hand, approaches the Scriptures with implicit readiness to believe that the testimonies to Jesus literally refer to Him.¹⁵

Nevertheless, one must point out that for Rudolf Bultmann the salvation-occurrence is based on the objective death of Jesus and no one else's death. Schubert Ogden has urged taking account of this point. But why his death? Why should the death of an everyday, Jewish man of whom very little is known be the controlling focus of a contemporary theologian's philosophical and theological system and of his lifetime vocation? Somehow there seems to be an inner, logical imbalance in a system which catapults to such significant heights a death which could only be of inconsequential import because of its association with a local man of questionable real importance.

Critics of Rudolf Bultmann's theology from the "right" (Karl Barth) and from the "left" (Fritz Buri and Schubert Ogden) seem also to agree for different reasons that the emphasis he places on the centrality and indispensability of the event Jesus Christ is not in accordance with the existential interpretation he gives to this event.¹⁶

His emphasis on the death of Jesus is evidence of his desire to return to the Reformation. Both he and John Wesley in Reformation fashion in stressing Jesus' death appropriately sought to reassert and to recover for their own theologically "wayward" day the pith of the evangelical Gospel.¹⁷ I agree with Karl Barth that Rudolf Bultmann's emphasis is right, but that his interpretation of the event of Jesus Christ seems to undermine his emphasis.¹⁸

Is it unfair to wonder if Rudolf Bultmann's fundamental, subjective assumptions about the Scriptural testimony to Jesus Christ have, to a great extent, dictated his method and approach which in turn rationalize and corroborate his pre-conceptions in terms of a complicated, scholarly analysis which proves what it has already determined to find and what it has already assumed?¹⁹

Rudolf Bultmann's contribution is that he forces us back to an original primordial judgment which every generation, regardless of era, must make. Regardless of exhaustive, scholarly investigation pursued as far as it legitimately can go, the researcher, whether in the eighteenth or in the

twentieth century, must still form a judgment of Scripture on the basis of unsolvable, unprovable and irretrievable historical events and on testimony to phenomena which is empirically unverifiable. Rudolf Bultmann assumed his radical, theological predecessors' predisposition of scepticism toward Jesus, concluding that Jesus was unimportant to the real issue of salvation in the New Testament.

However, he may actually lead us to the opposite conclusion: that the historical person Jesus is vital to salvation. He tends to demonstrate that the sceptic who has a preconceived, fundamental distrust of the New Testament documents and their testimony can very probably never expect to have his mind quelled or be convinced because of the nature of his own presupposition and the dearth of data and corroborating evidence which is desirable for scientific proof. All the hypotheses in the world cannot make up for the lack of data that are adequate to give the historical scientist what he desires -- sufficient evidence to corroborate or discredit the New Testament claims and the various hypotheses put forward to account for them.

Rudolf Bultmann's theology can be seen, from one point of view, to sow the seeds of Christian theological self-destruction. One admires the fearlessness with which he pursues his theology in spite of the possibility of this kind of criticism. Nonetheless, the length to which he takes his criticism arouses the question of whether or not he brings Christianity to its breaking point. If Christianity's raison d'être is Jesus Christ, and He is declared irrelevant and unimportant to the real interest of Christian faith, does not CHRISTianity then dissolve? Why consider a body of documents which presuppose and unequivocally set forth Him if He is found to be irrelevant? Thus, we arrive at the very antithesis of Christianity and the view of a Celsus. Likewise, Karl Barth thought Rudolf Bultmann's christological conclusions unavoidably followed from methodological presuppositions which he affirmed would "mean the overthrow of theology". He went so far as to regard the christological conclusions as "heretical".²⁰

Consequently, Rudolf Bultmann's importance may not be so much in his attempt to formulate a viable salvation without the historical person Jesus Christ, but rather in ironically and unintentionally demonstrating its opposite: that the historical, person Jesus Christ is of vital necessity to Christian salvation and theology if it is to remain CHRISTian theology. Hence, Rudolf Bultmann's descendants have to correct him and say that faith must have "support in the historical Jesus himself".²¹

THE ATONEMENT

Neither John Wesley nor Rudolf Bultmann wrote at great length on the subject of the atonement. Both use biblical types which have been historically identified with certain theories. More specifically, John Wesley stresses Jesus dying "for us" all and uses particularly the "satisfaction" and "penal" descriptions.²²

Rudolf Bultmann uses the "Christus victor" image of Christ's deliverance of us from this age's evil interpreted according to the mystery-religions and the Gnostic - Redeemer myth as elucidated by William Bousset.²³

John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's explanations of the meaning of Jesus' death are stereotypically consistent with and integral to their philosophical assumptions and their understandings of justification. Although one might characterize the essential distinction between their views as a difference between theological epochs, the difference in kind between John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann was the difference which John Wesley already had encountered in Faustus Socinus' view. They all agreed that Jesus' death in Jerusalem was an objective, visible event in world history. However, Rudolf Bultmann, as Faustus Socinus before him, rejected the proposition that there was an essential, causal, ontological linkage between God's inner will to forgive sin and deliver man from the evil powers and Jesus' historical death. For them, Jesus' death was not a requirement that must be met to satisfy God's inner nature in order that He might release His pardoning grace.

According to John Wesley, this must be so. He assumed that there was an eternal meaning which transcended subjective, human signification and which necessarily corresponded to the crucifixion event.

Rudolf Bultmann consistently assumed that this event, as any other historical event, contained no meaning in and of itself but was subject to the interpreter's understanding.²⁴ However, one may query Rudolf Bultmann as to what the constant, controlling factor is which enables every individual interpreter to achieve the same consistent meaning which Rudolf Bultmann attaches to it. Nevertheless, he is reminiscent of Protestant evangelicalism (as is John Wesley) in that the absolute centrality and necessity of Christ's death to the authentic possibility of existence is everywhere asserted in his theology (in opposition to Fritz Buri's and Schubert Ogden's objection).

Whereas John Wesley's description seeks to account for the relation between God and the Cross and the consequent effects, Rudolf Bultmann does not address himself to this matter. Indeed, the issue is irrelevant to Rudolf Bultmann because God is such that He cannot be subjected to this kind of rationalization. Moreover, he summarily assumes that the New Testament shares only his "subjective" interest in how the event can be seen to be actually happening in the existence of man.

John Wesley's understanding of the atonement, in which Jesus bore the punishment for our sins and was a sufficient, off-setting satisfaction for the immensity of humankind's offense against the sovereign God, interlocks with his conception of a justification with moral implications. Rudolf Bultmann dismisses the idea of vicarious, propitiatory sacrifice for sin because he says it was not really a useful image to Paul, and consequently he does not conceive of a justification with moral implications. In contrast to John Wesley, he does not view man's fundamental problem as one in which man offends against the Divine Being.

The issue of limited versus unlimited atonement, once fervently embraced by John Wesley, was for Rudolf Bultmann a non-issue. The spirit of Rudolf

Bultmann's theological proposal is that of Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger who protest against "the many", "the they", and the category of general abstraction. Rather, in nominalistic fashion, Rudolf Bultmann pinpoints true existence in the single man, "Dasein". However, he does not affirm the doctrinaire teaching of "election".

As we shall say later, the great strength of his proposal is its earnest bias toward and preferment for the individual who in modern, Western, industrialized and technological society was increasingly viewed as being depersonalized and lost in the lonely crowd.

He is content not to make an appeal for or to stress that the salvation-occurrence is directed toward "all", as John Wesley insistently wanted to do. Perhaps to do so might have been construed as taking away from the urgent appeal for the endangered individual.

Consistently with the above, Rudolf Bultmann's doctrine of sin is characterized by the individual's seeking existence according to the world and "everyday" conventions of "the mass". In contrast, the doctrine of justification portrays authentic existence as the individual's radical resolution against the world.

Does the inference that the salvation-occurrence for Rudolf Bultmann tends toward exclusiveness concern him? Is he concerned that it appears to be predisposed toward a few individuals against "the many"?

Rudolf Bultmann's position shows up in contrast when compared with John Wesley's life-long, insistent appeal for the "whoever" and the "for all". As Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley, though in a different way, was repelled by the mediocrity of "the many". Nevertheless, though Christians were viewed as distinct from the world, he maintained that the wholly, qualitatively distinct, saving grace was made available democratically by the cross to "all" who would receive it.

A theological affirmation which moves away from exclusiveness is in keeping with the current philosophic-political-theological mood of Western,

social democracies and Third-World liberation movements. However, some may argue that John Wesley unconsciously taught an exclusivism in that salvation was limited to those who had undergone a particular faith experience. Moreover, though his preaching might have been directed to all, he not only held certain theological assumptions but took certain steps in regards to his societies that made Methodists more exclusive than inclusive.

THE DESCRIPTION OF JUSTIFICATION

In turning to the term "justification" or "righteousness" itself, we find that neither John Wesley nor Rudolf Bultmann give in depth biblical exegetical support for their formulations on "justification". Though their conversation with the Old Testament is limited, the judgments they make regarding the form of justification in the Old Testament is in agreement with each one's New Testament understanding.

Essentially, Rudolf Bultmann posits that the Jew and Jesus conceive of the "form" of righteousness in the same manner as the apostle Paul; that is, as "obedience". Contrary to the "federal" theologians, John Wesley also states that the acceptance of God is on the same basis in the Old Testament as in the New Testament. However, divergent from Rudolf Bultmann, he asserts that only Adam was under the covenant of obedience. After Adam, the Jew's and Gentile's acceptance of God alike was "pardon" through the grace of God.

FORENSIC/ESCHATOLOGICAL

When we compare their understandings of New Testament "righteousness", we find they both view "righteousness" forensically as a legal, courtroom term in the Melancthonian sense. Rudolf Bultmann pictures the verdict being returned by the "forum" of public opinion and those to whom one is responsible. In this forensic description, he is somewhat ambiguous. In so far as the forensic dimension goes, he does not see the need to fulfill the image by including in it the "the judge" and his crucial role in the court

proceedings.²⁵

Rudolf Bultmann probably avoids using the "judge" image in the forensic sense because he wants to view God as "judge" in reference only to righteousness' "eschatological" sense. God, who was conceived of by the Jews as coming in the eschaton with a future verdict, is seen by Paul as now being realized in the present. Rudolf Bultmann cannot allow the forensic sense to comprehend a judge's judgment because that would entail God returning two distinct verdicts, one prior to and one in His predicted Last Judgment yet to be realized. In other words, the image of the "judge" is not involved in the forensic sense but associated only with the eschatological judgment at the end of time.

According to Rudolf Bultmann, the "rightwising" verdict of being "declared just" was assumed by the Jew and Paul alike to be a reckoning rendered by "the judge" in the final eschatological judgment. However, Paul interpreted this eschatological judgment as now being realized in the present. Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann telescopes all prophecies, judgment verdicts, and references to the Messiah into one parousia. Contrary to John Wesley, he will not allow that the "rightwising" declaration is a present verdict which is pronounced now in individual lives between Jesus' advent and the verdict of the final, Last Judgment still to come.

Rudolf Bultmann seems to have recognized that the typical Protestant way of handling this problem was unsatisfactory. How could it be asserted that the believer was judged inviolably righteous now and to eternity and still face another judgment in the future?

Though his interpretation might rid Protestantism of this problem, his attempted distinction between justification as "forensic" and "eschatological" seems strained. Among other things, if one accepts his argument, one then is left with trying to account for how and why Paul "historizes" (essentially, views existentially) the predicted cosmic-natural, apocalyptic event and views it as having occurred in Jesus while concomitantly viewing the same event as a

cosmic-natural, apocalyptic event which is unfulfilled and waiting to occur at the end of chronological time?

John Wesley does not view the differentiation between the forensic and the eschatological in terms of two various images of one act of "rightwising", but rather in terms of two temporally separate pronouncements of the one Judge, each with its own signification.²⁶

The two theologians' interpretations are coloured by their assumptions regarding the nature of God, their conceptions of the identity of Jesus and the nature of His mission, and what the Scriptural testimony could be in light of their own philosophies about the nature of history.

At stake in Rudolf Bultmann's particular interpretation is the understanding that at justification the Christian conceives of world-time as having ended. This interpretation precludes justification from having any effective, causal relation to this visible, temporal world. His conception regarding the eschatological image of present justification is in keeping with his acceptance of the notion that the coming eschaton which Jesus preached but did not see fulfilled was, in retrospect, seen by Paul as being fulfilled in Jesus.

EXTRINSIC

For both theologians, the righteousness adjudicated to the sinner in justification is an "extrinsic" righteousness and not a quality relating to the essence of human nature. Justification speaks about one's favourable standing in relation to the court (judge) as one who is acknowledged innocent. It is not a comment on the righteous, ethical quality of the person. Moreover, neither theologian accepts justification as a pronouncement that the person is actually clear of ethical wrong-doing or is actually ethically just.²⁷ Both are thoroughly Protestant at this point.

ACQUITTAL

Furthermore, for both theologians justification is, as it was for Augustine, a negative rather than a positive righteousness. It is acquittal rather than, as it was for Martin Luther, Reformed orthodoxy, and Count von Zinzendorf, the imputation and transference of Christ's perfect obedience and righteousness to the sinner for his perfect righteousness.

However, in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley did hold that the righteousness of Christ was imputed in some sense; namely, that the "merits of Christ" were imputed for forgiveness.²⁸ For Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus and his death could not be linked ontologically and causally to a verdict of pardon on the grounds of Jesus' death. Either side of the argument of the "imputed righteousness of Christ" which engulfed the protagonists of the Evangelical Awakening was obsolescent to Rudolf Bultmann because of the reason just stated above. Ironically, those disputants who saw themselves so divided over this issue were bedfellows from Rudolf Bultmann's perspective.

The issue per se of whether the genitive in the phrase "the righteousness of God" is "subjective" or "objective" does not engage John Wesley. In his Explanatory Notes Upon The New Testament, he agrees with Rudolf Bultmann in his comment on Romans 3:21 that the phrase "the righteousness of God" refers to the righteousness applicable to the believer. However, Rudolf Bultmann manifests a quite exceeding departure from the traditional understanding of the nature of God by not allowing, as Martin Luther and John Wesley do, the genitive to refer also to God's being.

Rudolf Bultmann does not accept, as John Wesley does, that acquittal includes more than the "passive" sense of a change in relation. He does not find that Paul is interested in any "active" sense of release from the guilt of former sins but only release from sinning. When Rudolf Bultmann speaks of the sinner being "absolved" from sin or God's not counting man's sin against him, this does not mean, as it does for John Wesley, "pardon" or forgiveness, but just discharge from the power of sin. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the

guilt of wrong against God is not that for which a sinner must be forgiven as it is for John Wesley.

Herein, while John Wesley is aligned with Martin Luther on this explanation, Rudolf Bultmann diverges from them both.²⁹ He accepts the "passive" sense of a change in man's relation without accepting that this change entails also actual pardon for sin. For John Wesley, the need for justification rests upon a spiritual and moral condition: man has rebelled and transgressed against God. For Rudolf Bultmann, the need for justification lies in a man's existential alienation from himself. He does not need a granting of "pardon" but rather to find himself. At the risk of oversimplifying it, for John Wesley justification answers a truly theo-logical problem; for Rudolf Bultmann, it answers an anthropo-logical problem.

Both are amenable to negative righteousness for different reasons: Rudolf Bultmann because there is no Jesus Christ with perfect obedience and righteousness to transfer; John Wesley because he deemed the Lutheran and Reformed understanding of "imputation" antithetical to the need and duty to become intrinsically righteous. In any case, both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann reject any idea of justification being a "legal fiction" but rather, in concurrence with their acceptance of negative righteousness, assert that the believer is actually righteous.

ETHICAL

Unlike John Wesley and John Calvin, Rudolf Bultmann is in harmony with Martin Luther in not distinguishing between justification and sanctification. In fact, for Rudolf Bultmann an ethical righteousness has no place in the Pauline understanding, whether connected with justification or sanctification. Ethical righteousness is a corruption introduced by the "developing Church". The decoupling of ethical and moral righteousness from salvation is one of the more profound differences between him and John Wesley. Rudolf Bultmann's conclusion is integral to and consistent with the

warp and woof of his existential-ontological interpretation.

Nevertheless, the two agree that there is an ethical sense of moral uprightness identified with righteousness in the New Testament. However, using a form of argument not unlike Martin Luther's in discarding the book of James, Rudolf Bultmann identifies the biblical books such as Ephesians, Colossians, and the "pastoral epistles" as "non-Pauline" and also inauthentic because they do not demonstrate an eschatological consciousness. This is a subjective conclusion built upon an already specious assumption of "eschatological" consciousness being the criterion of what is Pauline.

In any case, Rudolf Bultmann differs from many theological perspectives, including Martin Luther's, John Calvin's, John Wesley's, and that of the Roman Catholic in holding that the person reckoned actually righteous and absolved from sin by God's verdict is under no further necessity to produce ethical righteousness or moral renewal. He attempts to circumvent the Old Testament's ethical stress by claiming that such an ethical stress represented only one stream of Hebrew thought and not the authentic one of the Prophets, Jesus and Paul.

However, the Old Testament's emphasis on ethical righteousness from beginning to end seems too consistent and pervasive to make this theory attractive. The Old and New Testaments' religious consciousness is founded upon the perception that the transcendent, personal God jealously claims the spiritual, moral and ethical sphere of this visible, temporal world as His realm of concern and involvement. Rudolf Bultmann's reinterpretation seems to set forth less the Judeo-Christian understanding than the Greek, Hellenistic understanding with its impersonal, transcendent Deity removed from involvement in this world (which he desires to overcome).³⁰ Whether or not this seemingly un-Jewish interpretation owes to anything more conscious than the assumption of a dialectical critique and existential rebellion against Judeo-Christian norms in the Nietzschean tradition is difficult to say.

THE "UNGODLY" JUSTIFIED

In answering the question of who may be "rightwised", both theologians in loyal Protestant fashion agree on the form of the answer: the "ungodly".³¹ Their proclamations of this ancient truth were spoken afresh in each one's particular context as they cut across the grain of the prevailing "everyday" theological and ecclesiastical understandings.

Their answers represent a volte-face from the prior understandings in which each had been tutored. In John Wesley's case, his radical proposal, which was clothed in spiritual and moral, biblical understanding, rejected every and all so-called grounds of justification based on the "good" in a person, whether virtuous disposition or any antecedent "righteousness" or "good works". This was deemed an offensive departure from the "holy living" school, to which he formerly adhered, and the general, accepted understanding prevalent in the Church of England; that is, that faith plus good works were the requirements for justification.

In Rudolf Bultmann's situation, the radicalness of his proposal seems to come not so much in his suggestion that "the sinner" is the recipient of justification, but rather in his portrayal of this "sinner" in predominantly philosophical, existential terms in which the sinner was identified with modern culture and theological "waywardness", particularly German culture and theological "liberalism" (out of which he had come).

Besides identifying "the sinner" as the recipient of justification, each sees this "sinner" being qualified in a particular way in order to be justification's ready recipient. For both theologians, the "sinner", the receiver of faith, must be qualified in such a way that he becomes a "sinner" who is conscious of his sin. John Wesley construes this inner consciousness in accordance with biblical categories which he experimentalizes; that is, he construes them as being known in the individual's inner experience. This is a possibility since such relevant terms as "guilt" and "the fear" (of punishment and wrath of God), "the spirit of bondage into fear", and evil tempers have a psycho-

spiritual orientation. Which aspects of a stylized Methodist description of "conviction" may be generalized is a more difficult matter.

The sinner's sinfulness as registered within him by God has its meaning and force for John Wesley only in reference to a personal, divine, being, God who is holy, morally righteous and who expects His creatures to be so. In his theology, the holy, divine, personal Being who judges sin is the referent who ultimately creates the experiential crisis of "conviction". He usually "convicts" (convinces of sin) the sinner by some "awful providence", but more ordinarily by the law through the Spirit.³²

Several relevant points which distinguish John Wesley from Rudolf Bultmann at this point may be brought to the fore. Rudolf Bultmann asserts that the particular Jewish legal enactments (Law of Moses) in the Old Testament are not the eternal will of God codified. They are only temporary, historically conditioned expressions relevant to the Jews, which, Paul says, are abolished for the Christian. One inference from this is these laws (including the "moral law") which pertain to the Jews are not to be generalized as eternally applicable to all persons in every age. Therefore, they are not "written in the hearts" of those who are not Jews.

John Wesley's interpretation of the law as the divine, eternal transcript of virtue, wisdom, truth and good in visible form which made sin appear to be sin, not only for the Old Testament Jew but universally for any person in any age, is rejected by Rudolf Bultmann. According to him, the law as John Wesley envisaged it is not God's abiding means which assaults the sinner's conscience and brings him to "conviction". The consciousness of the sinner as sinner does not consist in the recognition of himself as a transgressor of the Law. Neither is "conviction" a despair that comes from futilely trying to perform the law or the failure to fulfill its expectations due to transgressions.

For John Wesley, as for Martin Luther and the Reformed, the sinful condition or living "according to the flesh" of which the sinner becomes conscious is defined and primarily revealed by the content of the Law. For

Rudolf Bultmann, the content of the legal code does not constitute the sinful condition of which the sinner becomes conscious. Performance or lack of performance of the legal code is merely indicative of what is sin; namely, rejection of God's demand. In arguing this way, Rudolf Bultmann avoids making the legal code into a god above God as John Wesley's heavy accent on the law gives the impression of doing.

John Wesley does not wish to distinguish God's will (consequently, His law) from God Himself. He says "the will of God is God himself: It is God considered as willing thus and thus".³³ While the sinful condition is recognized as helpless bondage to transgressing the law, this transgressing is also seen by him as a transgression ultimately against God Himself. Precisely in teaching him that he is not able to keep the law and be righteous, the law shows him he is without God and devoid of His power and grace.

Often the stronger impression in John Wesley is that of the sinner's consciousness lying in his being a transgressor of an impersonal law. Though Rudolf Bultmann's insistence on the fundamental, sinful condition as a rejection of God's demand still does not overcome the dichotomy between God's imperative and God Himself; nevertheless, his desire to stress the fundamental, sinful condition behind the legal requirements brings a clarity and emphasis from which John Wesley's theology could benefit.

Nonetheless, like Rudolf Bultmann, John Wesley does view disobedience to the Law as an indicator of a life devoid of God. Many modern scholars would have difficulty with John Wesley's argument because it equates God's eternal will with what are judged to be contextually determined prescriptions.

On the other hand, while Rudolf Bultmann avoids deifying the law, he eviscerates it of moral content and severs the connection between consciousness of sin and consciousness of having transgressed against the personal, moral will of a holy, personal God. This is a re-reading of millennia of Judeo-Christian interpretation.

John Wesley asserted the continuing role of the law as the ordinary method in bringing Jew and non-Jew alike in every age to conviction. Rudolf Bultmann declared that what the law did for the Jew (brought him to recognize the demand of God for complete obedience) occurs for the Gentile without the law. The law is not currently a means to bring the everyday sinner to encounter God's demand.

John Wesley does not dispute that the Gentile or Jew may be convinced of sin without the law. However, the sinner, regardless of who he or she may be, is shown according to John Wesley to be the sinner he or she is by the contrasting will of God as expressed in the biblical commandments. For Rudolf Bultmann the law has been just one means among others which light up the sinner's consciousness of sin.

THE "UNGODLY" QUALIFIED

While Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley take the New Testament as their primary sourcebook, Rudolf Bultmann, nonetheless avows that in order to understand in what way the sinner who may be justified is qualified, one must first explicate this content according to a rational and "scientific" philosophical analysis of man; specifically, one must appropriate the existential-ontological analysis which accomplishes this.

Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann in his description of the sinner who is qualified and challenged to believe draws, though not in a slavish fashion, upon Martin Heidegger's analysis. Truly, for Rudolf Bultmann the sinner's religious consciousness is qualified according to philosophical, existential-ontological categories.³⁴ In agreement with Martin Heidegger and other existentialists, Rudolf Bultmann accepts that man finds himself in the world in the basic state of mind of anxiety.³⁵ In the face of his own insecurity, man turns from God, perverting his existence. (Martin Heidegger does not speak of turning from God but that man does not seize his authentic possibility for being.) What Martin Heidegger calls "falling", Rudolf Bultmann calls "sin" or

"life according to the flesh", placing a Scripturally negative judgment upon Martin Heidegger's neutral possibility.³⁶ For Rudolf Bultmann, "sin" describes the condition of all persons and is, therefore, more than just a possibility of man as it is for Martin Heidegger.³⁷

In turning away from God, he turns to creation and himself. He puts his confidence in worldly values and accomplishments and becomes lost to the world.³⁸ The sin of man is his claim to seek "to exist in his own right, to be his own master, and to take his life into his own hands."³⁹ Seeking to implement this claim drives man up against his limitations and makes him conscious of them. This leaves the sinner insecure and leads him to the point of self-surrender.

In this event of the individual having his limitations unveiled to him, we approach the sense in which Rudolf Bultmann holds that a sinner is qualified prior to faith.

However, he says, the sinner's condition is not radical enough at this point for Christian faith without "the confession of sin".⁴⁰ This means that man must not only acknowledge his finitude and that his claim was false, but also that he has become "guilty" in the self-will that so far ruled his life.⁴¹ According to Rudolf Bultmann, the sinner, if he is in earnest, has more than a negative recognition that he is finite. He also has the complementing, positive recognition of the claims of the "thou", the power, that makes him finite.⁴²

In bringing in and exalting "guilt's" necessity for Christian faith, Rudolf Bultmann's ambiguity regarding guilt appears to *jeopardize* an attempt for a strong, unified formulation. For when speaking of the atonement, he relegates to insignificance Paul's image of Christ's death as the propitiatory sacrifice that cancels guilt which is the essential, salvic nexus in John Wesley's theology.⁴³ By so doing, he discounts a connecting link between what the New Testament views as man's problem of guilt and its solution. Moreover, when defining "rightwising", he does not accept that for Paul acquittal is

release from the guilt of past wrong. He says freedom from sin is not understood in its depth if it is viewed only as the cancellation of guilt.⁴⁴ However, in other places, he argues by way of an analogy to human love that the situation necessary for faith to arise is one in which the person under judgment takes seriously his "guilt".⁴⁵

Sometimes it seems Rudolf Bultmann uses "guilt" or the implication of it as a concept integral to the unity of his argument. On other occasions, he eschews the relevance of "guilt". Certainly, he wishes to avoid any interpretation which suggests Christ's death was a necessary sacrifice to forgive sin's guilt; yet, he argues that there is "guilt" which needs the word of "forgiveness". Does he not miss the opportunity which the New Testament provides him in connecting guilt and forgiveness with the Cross?

Rudolf Bultmann wants to avoid identifying "guilt" with moral or legal transgression, and, therefore, a legal code that produces it. This voices a concern which is shared by many today who accept that modern man's problem is no longer addressed by a "guilt" identified with a contextually derived legal code.

Nevertheless, in arguing as he does that a person becomes guilty when he refuses the love of another person, the inference that a moral wrong has been committed seems unavoidable.⁴⁶ An affront to another person and a refusal of an "ought" has been committed.⁴⁷

In my judgment, his explanation of how an acknowledgement of finitude must be linked with a sense of "guilt" is weak. Why should every unveiling of finitude be linked to "guilt"? If the term "guilt" is to have meaning, it needs to be that which occurs in a context which ultimately is inter-personal or is believed to be such. If it is not, particularly in the relation between man and an impersonal "Beyond", then the "guilt" of the individual is reduced finally to the individual's own interpretation which he places upon his own self-consciousness. In that case, why should the individual call his own subjective understanding "guilt"? "Guilt" would seem to imply incurring a

debt or wrong against another person who has the potential of knowing it to be such. One can commit something which one could possibly label a "wrong" -- for instance, reject the saving proclamation. Why should this be thought "wrong" if the individual who committed it is in reality the final arbiter and interpreter of his own action and state? Of course, Rudolf Bultmann desires to overcome this kind of nihilist conclusion. I am not satisfied that he does.⁴⁸

KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY FOR FAITH

We need to analyze how John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann further qualify the guilty sinner's pre-understanding requisite for faith. This becomes elucidated in the discussion on the knowledge necessary for faith.

In dealing with the question of who is a candidate for justification and upon what condition the guilty ungodly are justified, we find both theologians resounding proponents of the Protestant answer: the guilty ungodly are "rightwised" through faith alone. In delving into the nature of this faith as each conceives it, their differences over faith's starting point may not be as clear-cut as they seem.

John Wesley in Roman Catholic scholastical and Protestant tradition allows that faith presupposes "assent" (assensus).⁴⁹ However, Rudolf Bultmann dissents from this tradition and argues in the Anselmian tradition that the faith which believes (qua - the "how") must precede the faith which is believed (quae - the "what"). He is convinced among other things that Jesus Christ's divine nature cannot be recognized prior to faith. In fact, he goes so far as to say that considering the question of Jesus' authenticity and the claims about him actually destroys the offensive paradox necessary to authentic faith. Has not the would-be-believer who comes to faith assuming that Jesus Christ's divine nature is unrecognizable already considered the claims of Jesus and made a certain decision regarding Jesus' authenticity?

In accordance with this, it would seem that the would-be-believer has already made a negative, non-assenting assent if he has committed himself to construing the ascriptions to Jesus Christ in the manner which Rudolf Bultmann presupposes are necessary for a valid formulation of faith. That he deemed the question of Jesus' authenticity inappropriate prior to faith did not deter him from making Jesus' authenticity a point of concern in regards to faith and "rightwising".

Further, he rejects "assent" for at least two other reasons. Firstly, "assent" for him is synonymous with the demands of an inauthentic, sinful religion. Secondly, having to confess doctrine prior to faith would make a work of man necessary for justification.

Indeed, both he and John Wesley were repelled by what each understood in his own way as the vulgarizing of faith by the orthodoxies of their day. Both considered the orthodox proposals and "every confession of faith" which reduced faith (thereby religion) to "right opinion" or "assent to one, or to ten thousand truths" to be an "illusion" and the vainest of "all religious dreams".⁵⁰

"Living" or "authentic" faith was not an intellectual assent to a rational, theological proposition.⁵¹ Each saw his theological proposals as proposals capable of overcoming the languishing theological situations of their day and returning persons to the faith of the primitive Church.

Notwithstanding this, in disallowing "assent" any role in faith, Rudolf Bultmann asserted a radically divergent view not only from John Wesley but also from Roman Catholicism and classical Protestantism. His affirmation is underpinned by assumptions foundational to his philosophical theology. These we will comment on further as we proceed. As a result, he takes a hard and fast position which sets up a false alternative; that is, he assumes "assent" prior to faith or as a part of faith is to "speak about God" rather than from God; viz, inauthentically and sinfully.

John Wesley's understanding permits variable possibilities. Though, according to John Wesley, faith was not merely bare "assent", "living faith" might and did include within it "assent". He accepted that the understanding and rational conviction had something to do with faith and religion.⁵²

On the other hand, he refrained from declaring that even clear conceptions of capital doctrines and assent to them were an absolutely necessary prerequisite to "living faith". He was accused by Bishop Warburton of separating "reason from grace".

Unlike Rudolf Bultmann, his view in this regard was not motivated by a desire to overcome doctrines considered to be obtrusive banes to philosophical and intellectual integrity. Rather, it was an acknowledgement that people who were of varying degrees of theological ignorance, sophistication, and mental capability did not have to be endowed with or attain to a certain level of rational understanding before they "may cleave to God through the Son of his love."

He shared with Rudolf Bultmann a corrective desire to rescue faith from an over-intellectualizing tendency. Both showed a desire to boil the Christian message down to its necessary minimum.⁵³ For neither theologian was the human, religious impulse considered to be essentially noetic. Religion pervaded the whole of man. For John Wesley, genuine religion was seated primarily in the heart and inner experience; for Rudolf Bultmann it was in existentiell self-understanding and the will.⁵⁴

John Wesley's formulation attempted to avoid an elitist or unsympathetic tendency which consciously or unconsciously presupposed religion to be of the domain of those who had the natural, intellectual endowment or the educational or instructional background to make the rational theological convictions necessary for faith.⁵⁵

On the other hand, Rudolf Bultmann's proposal is one which is written with the educated in mind. His conception commends itself as one which does not require rational, theological affirmations prior to faith. If one accepts

his interpretation in its distilled essence at face value, it can be simple. However, his conception of justification by faith presupposes the acceptance of a fairly rigorous philosophy and theology which demands more than just an average level of thought and intellectual affirmation.

Rudolf Bultmann alleged that if any theological affirmations were prescribed prior to faith, these affirmations would make a work of man necessary for faith.⁵⁶ Thus, he resists these ostensibly to protect sola fide.

Nonetheless, the problem of "assent" raises the whole question of reason's role in relation to faith and what pre-faith knowledge and understanding, if any, are prerequisite for justification by faith. Particularly at this point, a foundational, pervading, epistemological difference between each theology noticeably shows itself at this point. John Wesley in the Thomist philosophic tradition accepts that phenomena in the intelligible, objective world and supra-world imprint their meaning upon the human mind or soul. The mind may then assent to the message it has received as true.

On the other hand, Rudolf Bultmann in the existential, Heideggerian tradition accepts that the existing human person projects meaning onto the objective, meaning-neutral world, thereby making it intelligible.

Taking the guilty sinner who hears the saving proclamation as an example, John Wesley accepts that the hearer is presented with meaning-laden statements carrying even the most rudimentary essence of the salvation offer which have first to be apprehended (notitia) and then consented to (assensus) by the mental faculty. For him, a mental transaction occurs and the understanding, regardless of how simple the level, is engaged, acting in agreement with the message en route to proper, living faith. He defended himself to Bishop Warburton by saying that he did not so much as "insinuate that the understanding has nothing to do in the work" (of God).⁵⁷

Nonetheless, though theological rationality was not unrelated to saving faith, Rudolf Bultmann and he were agreed in so far as John Wesley accepted that generally the first movement of religion is not noetic per se.

Whereas for Rudolf Bultmann God addressed the "will", for John Wesley God addressed the "heart".⁵⁸ John Wesley seemed to assume that regardless of the lack or degree of pre-faith Christian notional understanding, there were movements that people felt within their hearts that were "intuitively" through the sense of "faith" (not saving faith) correlated to God. He stated, "Men usually feel desires to please God before they know how to please Him."⁵⁹ He does not elaborate on how one knows these feelings are related to God. However, he seems to have assumed that a constitutive essence of man created by God was an investiture by God of an inner sense, "faith", the avenue of knowledge of the "invisible world", of Him.⁶⁰ In any case, the heart stirrings within prompted him to ask "What must I do to be saved?". While rational knowledge was not so much considered the presupposition for saving faith, nevertheless, rational understanding was channeled through faith's inner sense and was part and parcel with it. Thus, an assent to supra-rational, supra-objective data would be part of the "pre-understanding" of saving faith.

For Rudolf Bultmann, when a hearer is addressed by the proclamation of Jesus as the Son of God, he apprehends the statement not as a statement which tells him about Jesus' objective (or supra-objective) nature or transmits an objective message, but only as a demand to accept or to reject. He allows there is a notitia of sorts, a mental apprehension which is involved in faith. However, it is the mind laying hold of what is not objective, information-laden data whose credibility must be acknowledged before proceeding to faith. For him, the reasoning and judging features of rationality are uninvolved in faith. The saving proclamation is an address to the will which assents by acting.

Several comments may be made. Each theologian wants a faith which will fully engage the whole man and which will avoid an arid rationalism. For Rudolf Bultmann, having the whole man involved is a question of "how" man is engaged rather than "how much" of man is engaged. If his will is engaged, he is fully engaged. Rudolf Bultmann's argument that the whole self is

involved even when the inner man and experience are absent is in keeping with his existentialism. Moreover, it is reminiscent--though to my mind Rudolf Bultmann seems to go beyond him--of Martin Luther's assertions that earthly reason and outward, sense experience are insufficient and dull to the faith which transcends them.⁶¹ Though the contrast is held by John Wesley, he seems to soften it in some sense because he did not attack reason to Martin Luther's degree.

For John Wesley, both "how" and "how much" of man are relevant. If a man's heart is touched, then the man is "serious". Nonetheless, if his heart is touched and he is "serious", then his reason and will will not be unengaged.⁶²

Several queries arise. Can Rudolf Bultmann's formulation be expected to "work", among any but initiates? Will the communication between proclamation and hearer be as he describes if the hearer is wholly ignorant of any of the traditional, rational propositions regarding Jesus Christ and the New Testament? Are the analysis of human nature and the epistemological assumptions adequate which assumes that uninitiated rational people will respond affirmatively to a bald, uninformative command? Do we know - with what certainty and why - that the hearers will interpret this biblical "statement"--which appears to be just that--to be in reality a "demand"?

Some of the same questions may just as well be asked of John Wesley. Does not the message of justification by faith as preached by him assume a pre-understanding of a Christian world-view and the acceptance of such; that is, a context where some prior knowledge and acceptance of the basic assumptions of Christianity exist in order that it may be received? Can John Wesley's message be efficacious without a hearer's prior acceptance of the existence of a supernatural God? Will modern, rational people who hear the proclamation such as John Wesley's assume with him that the content refers to supernatural "objective" reality rather than mythology?

These questions lead to a further assessment of the philosophical conception of faith's pre-understanding. Rudolf Bultmann vigorously rejects assensus as a pre-condition to faith on the grounds that it would require "two faiths" for justification. Nevertheless, he himself cannot avoid assuming two understandings necessary for justification. Moreover, though he rejects rational assent prior to faith, his system is not without its own demand for rational assent prior to faith. Just as it can be argued against the classical, Christian description, so the philosophical analysis of human existence is a rational formulation which must be intellectually examined and rationally accepted as the one which explains human existence before one assents in faith to the proclamation.

Rudolf Bultmann assumes that the proclamation conceived in existential-ontological terms can be grasped by man because man has a corresponding existential-ontological pre-understanding through which he conceives of himself and the world. Both he and John Wesley are arguing in similar fashion that man already has as a given the manner of thinking about existence that is necessary to apprehend the proclamation. Rudolf Bultmann employs Thomas Aquinas' manner of arguing in stating that the philosophical, existential-ontological analysis is not something which gives to the man new information that was unknown to the man prior to his hearing it formulated. Rather, the proclamation is the event which unveils for the man the existential understanding that is the a priori human understanding which is covered up until the event.

Why has it been covered up? Because of sin. Namely, every person is already guided by a false understanding of human existence and everyone attempts to secure his existence by means of what he establishes. Essentially, this false understanding means viewing the world from the traditional, philosophical "subject-object" ontology.

Why are people at once capable of knowing themselves and the world with an existential-ontological self-understanding but rather, always irresistibly,

inevitably, miss this understanding and conceive of the world from the traditional "subject-object" perspective assumed by John Wesley? How can this affirmation be squared with existential philosophers who do not see themselves and the world from the "subject-object" ontology but who, nevertheless, are considered to be unbelievers (because they do not know the specific possibility)? One wants clarification as to how an existential philosopher who views the world from an existential ontology but who does not resolve to know the specific possibility in God's saving act in Jesus Christ must still be a sinner, and if a sinner, one who views the world from a "subject-object" ontology.⁶³

In any case, the myth of the Fall for Rudolf Bultmann does not give an ontological explanation of why everyone inevitably misses the understanding but is simply a figurative way of acknowledging that sin is. This raises a concern for his proposal at this point. He is asserting the case for something - everyone has an existential-ontological pre-understanding - for which he does not have corresponding objective, human experience to which to point. Of course, John Wesley asserted the case for an understanding in which it too would be disputed whether he had objective, human experience.

At any rate, human experience, as Rudolf Bultmann admits, makes a convincing case for the philosophical viewpoint he rejects. We do not know that man in fact has an a priori knowledge of historical, existential existence since actual human experience, as Rudolf Bultmann argues, points to a different understanding of existence. In order to assert that natural, unbelieving man knows of "historical existence", one must already have assented to the existential philosophical analysis of man.

Rudolf Bultmann gives no "scientific" reason behind the figurative image why man inevitably views the world from the "subject-object" ontology when an existential pre-understanding belongs to his life. He does not address the concern of how or why the sinful man, whose existential understanding is covered up and who views the world through the eyes of a sinful ontology,

does not understand the saving preaching as information-laden communication. Moreover, why does this natural man rationally discriminate -- assuming, as Rudolf Bultmann does, that the claim of the proclamation is not a rational proposition -- between certain elements of the saving message ("Jesus lived and died") as statements understood in terms of "subject-object" ontology and other elements of the proclamation ("Jesus is the pre-existent Son of God") as understood in terms of an existential conception?

Therefore, he has not satisfactorily demonstrated that man in fact has the existential-ontological pre-understanding that he asserts. Whether or not we view the saving proclamation as an existential proclamation to be assented to by existential faith depends upon whether or not we are beforehand willing to assent to the existential-ontological philosophical analysis of human existence in whose terms faith and the proclamation are conceived.

Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann does not avoid asserting "two faiths" and has not overcome John Wesley's view which he repudiates. In summary, one must decide intellectually whether or not the philosophical proposal Rudolf Bultmann offers is in fact the human pre-understanding which correlates with actual human experience before one can be willing to entertain the notion of faith which presupposes this understanding. In other words, there must be a prior acceptance of what Rudolf Bultmann claims the proclamation is claiming.⁶⁴ Rudolf Bultmann is right to be concerned about turning faith into a work where mental agreement to rational propositions may be required prior to faith. However, he takes the concern to an unrealistic degree and goes beyond the point of the apostle Paul's concern.⁶⁵

THE RELATION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

John Wesley was unaware of Rudolf Bultmann's contemporary contention that a biblical and theological understanding of faith presupposes the presence of a prior perspective and "life-situation", the interpreter's prior relation to his subject at hand which is a relation grounded in the

interpreter's actual life-context in which he stands.⁶⁶ This relation is a real one only when the subject matter engages the interpreter by being a concern and problem for him; namely, when one has had one's own existentiell encounter.

The idea of "pre-understanding"⁶⁷ and "life-context" are more specifically expressed in the consideration of the relation between philosophy and theology. Rudolf Bultmann argues that faith's noetic understanding does not differ from unbelief's understanding. Unbelieving philosophy knows conceptually wholly what believing theology knows. Philosophy which knows human "historical existence" understands theology because theology is concerned with human existence. Stating this another way, Karl Barth and Schubert Ogden find that he holds that the New Testament expresses the self-understanding that is the same understanding of human life that modern philosophers have called "the historicity of man" or that Martin Heidegger has described in his existential-ontological analysis.⁶⁸ These philosophical concepts are accepted as expressing the Christian faith in completely adequate terms.⁶⁹ However, God's revelation in Jesus Christ is the "specific" determination of the human existence which philosophy sees only as a possibility.⁷⁰

Thus, Rudolf Bultmann collapses the intellectual content of theology into the scope of philosophy, unbelieving existence, by de-objectifying and de-supernaturalizing theology.⁷¹ Indeed, John Wesley followed in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas and John Locke in assuming that philosophy's knowledge may overlap with theology and we may have a certain, natural knowledge of theology in so far as finite things point beyond themselves. But the assertion that unbelieving thought could have complete knowledge of theological thought would be considered by John Wesley a false claim to be rejected. To grant Rudolf Bultmann this claim that theological content was established by an unbelieving pre-understanding would be to grant him his philosophical assumptions and conceptual framework. John Wesley's epistemology assumed

that man was a tabula rasa and that man received information and meaning - both natural and supernatural - from outside himself.⁷² To grant Rudolf Bultmann his assertions would preclude the possibility of man receiving supranatural truth from beyond himself. This John Wesley was not prepared to do because, among other reasons, it would undermine his concept of faith and the saving grace of God.⁷³

As has been stated, Rudolf Bultmann accepts that philosophy and theology are completely harmonious in regards to their "scientific", rational content.⁷⁴ However, when it comes to religious or existentiell consciousness, he accepts that there is an irreconcilable gap.⁷⁵

Similarly, John Wesley also acknowledges a gulf between philosophy and theology in regard to saving faith's religious perception. However, though he accepts that philosophy and theology share, common intellectual ground, he diverges from Rudolf Bultmann by maintaining there is a divide between the two in rationality as well as in religious-consciousness.⁷⁶ John Wesley assumed that there is an invisible, eternal realm for which unaided, natural reason could not account and natural understanding could not penetrate. Natural, philosophical reason could not perceive what reason graced-by-faith sees. "Faith" is "sense" of the supra-sensual world which conveys religious consciousness as well as intellectual, rational perception.⁷⁷

John Wesley as well as Thomas Aquinas would agree with Martin Luther who stated, for example, that knowledge of the Trinity comes only from "inside" knowledge of God channeled through faith.⁷⁸

For either theologian to allow at this point the other's foundational theological and philosophical assumptions would be to undermine the other's theology. This was the stalemate in which Rudolf Bultmann and Karl Barth found themselves. Karl Barth felt that Rudolf Bultmann put the New Testament in a "strait jacket" by forcing it into the understanding of a prior criterion and by measuring it by an "alien canon".⁷⁹ He argued that if we

wanted to understand any given text, "the provisional clue to its understanding must be sought from the text itself, and moreover from its spirit, content and aim."⁸⁰ Karl Barth asserted that the New Testament text ought to be respected and that the criterion for understanding it ought to be derived from its spirit, content and aim.⁸¹ Moreover, we should seek to understand ourselves as we find ourselves understood in the text.⁸²

Rudolf Bultmann argued that in approaching the text the question philosophy asks it is what it says about human being as my being. This question is the true question to ask because it is the question that human being as being asks. As he said to Karl Barth, understanding the text in the framework of our self-understanding is "precisely the way toward understanding ourselves as we find ourselves understood in the text".⁸³

Several queries come to mind. If unbelieving existence knows rationally and intellectually in full what believing existence knows rationally and intellectually, why do we find that an existentiell encounter insures that only believing existence drafts theological affirmations that are peculiar to itself, even though unbelieving existence knows the affirmation's meaning?⁸⁴ Further, why should we think that the unbeliever knows what the believer knows when what the believer affirms in theology is not what the unbeliever knows to affirm? I am not convinced that this is less contrived than the philosophic or theological scholasticism of such as John Wesley in which it is held that unbelieving existence does not know the full meaning of the affirmations of believing existence.

Rudolf Bultmann's disclosure and elucidation for theology of the hermeneutic of taking into consideration the relation between the interpreter's affirmations and his prior "life-context" have made such a substantial mark upon theology that theology since then is not usually conducted without assuming the validity of this insight. Moreover, it is a formidable insight which is difficult to challenge effectively. Such contemporary theologies as black, feminist, and liberation theologies no doubt were enabled to arise as a

result of Rudolf Bultmann's seminal methodological approach.

Perhaps many who have applauded his weighty proposal have not fully appreciated how closely, perhaps inextricably, his hermeneutic and its explication are bound to the basic assumptions of the existential-ontological analysis.⁸⁵ For the content and meaning of any particular historical or theological proposition is axiomatically taken as deriving solely from the individual and his reflection upon his involvement with the subject rather than as objective content deriving from outside of man. Though this significant proposition accords with the inclination of strong currents of modern intellectual thought, it may, though not easily, be challenged as not necessarily being the case.

For John Wesley, in the classical tradition of Thomas Aquinas, faith supplements and clarifies philosophy - a point which Rudolf Bultmann denies. John Wesley, in the vein of Martin Luther and in modern times Karl Barth, was wary of philosophy and gave theology the ascendant role over it.

Rudolf Bultmann turned this relation upside down by making the content of theology dependent upon and subservient to philosophy. The philosophical description of the structure of existence is the content that fills the biblical and theological images rather than these images carrying content intrinsic to themselves.

Karl Barth corroborates this criticism when he charged Rudolf Bultmann of "surrendering theology to philosophy".⁸⁶ Schubert Ogden acknowledges the same point when he states that Rudolf Bultmann goes a "considerable distance toward conceding philosophy's claim".⁸⁷ Does the secret of theology lie in the discovery of a new philosophy, asks Karl Barth? Must we, he rhetorically queries in a tone of sarcasm, learn Chinese in order to get to the real Paul?⁸⁸

Though Karl Barth admits that an element of philosophy is in all theological language, one may wonder if Karl Barth granted Rudolf Bultmann's point as relevant to the discussion of the relation of philosophy and theology;

that is, every attempt to formulate theology presupposes a prior understanding. While Rudolf Bultmann did not discover this truism, he brought it to full awareness and clarity for theology. Moreover, it seems to have been an insight which has since set the methodological course of theology.

If we accept his postulate, the question arises: must we therefore also accept his explication of it; namely, that our understanding goes beyond the theological terms and images of the biblical text in that they represent little more than the understanding which we have brought to them? Or ought we to respect the theological terms and images as representing substance in their own right which may and/or may not reflect our own understanding but which may even clarify and correct our prior pre-understanding?

One must conclude that Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation which is in keeping with the post-Enlightenment shows a lack of confidence in the intellectual prowess, ability, and status of theology in comparison with modern philosophical and scientific disciplines. The modern context in which he lived would not have discouraged him in this attitude. In order to try to protect theology from what he saw as its annihilation at the hands of modern scientific atheism, Rudolf Bultmann sacrificed theology's claim to be a viable, independent intellectual alternative in the intellectual marketplace. Perhaps, one may argue, he could not give up what the intellectual marketplace had been already conceded.

Evidently known by his Methodist friends as "Wesley contra mundum", John Wesley and his theological stance contrasts more sharply with the world-context of his day.⁸⁹ He viewed theology as a check to natural reason's arrogant proclivity to claim superiority and omniscience. Nevertheless, his theological assumptions arouse the consternation of natural reason. They cordon off a preserve from which unbelieving, critical reason is kept. Hence, unbelieving reason cannot verify or deny the assertions made by faith's reason. This has been interpreted with suspicion as a bastion for superstition

and a convenient escape from critical scrutiny.

Both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann make a case for two realms of reality: the natural, empirical realm and the "supernatural" (Wesley), "transcendent" (Bultmann) realm. As a result of Immanuel Kant's philosophy, two distinctive realms of reality were delineated. With the rise of scientific empiricism, the phenomenal realm has been considered by Western culture to be the credible realm which offers the trustworthy account of existent reality. However, though they differ dramatically as to their understandings of the nature of the transcendent realm and its relation with the natural realm, nonetheless, they both seek to be proponents of it.

THE NATURE OF MAN

John Wesley's understanding of faith is dependent on a conception of man's nature which harks back to Scripture but was philosophically explicated by Thomas Aquinas and basically reasserted by John Locke. In accepting that man is a self-conscious subject, he affirmed that man is a composite of two mutually exclusive entities or qualities: soul and matter.⁹⁰ The soul is the inner, spiritual entity of thinking, feeling, willing and the faculty communicative with God.⁹¹ The soul itself may be considered the "I", the self, because it is distinct from the body and may exist separately from it, living on beyond bodily death. However, in the present state of existence, John Wesley held that the "I undoubtedly consisted both of soul and body".⁹² In consideration of this, his statement that man is an embodied spirit shows a likeness to Thomas Aquinas' view.

This kind of distinction between "soul" and "body" Rudolf Bultmann disputes, not only in principle, but also because it is the result of conceiving of the world in terms of the "subject-object" relation. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the nature of man does not consist of a conscious subject of thinking and willing incorporeality. The "self" is not isolatable, rational, self-possessed thoughts distinct from the body. Man is not two parts consisting of

inner and outer essences causally related.⁹³ The "self", the "I", is "body", soma.

Rudolf Bultmann's view parallels Arthur Schopenhauer's conception of man as one phenomenon with "soul" and "body", "inner" and "outer", being various ways of expressing the one phenomenon. Likewise, for Rudolf Bultmann, man's essential being is will. An "I" is a willing self who wills to live, to be authentic.⁹⁴ In the tradition of Arthur Schopenhauer, he holds that the action of the body is the act of the will objectified. Stated another way, the whole body is nothing but objectified will.⁹⁵

This means that subject and object are conceived as one. Arguing in this fashion seems to identify him as a philosophical materialist (in the vein of the "identity theory").⁹⁶ Therefore, his proposition which disavows any distinctive inner self or soul disallows the presence of a faculty which could communicate with an external, transmitting supernatural Source. Allowing this causes John Wesley's concept of faith which depends on an inner faculty sensitive to supernatural stimuli to fall. A wider implication of Rudolf Bultmann's philosophy is that the aspect of "personality" must be inextricably linked to "body". Further, the God which John Wesley knows, who is without body, cannot have "personality" or be "spirit".

Although Rudolf Bultmann's position is more fashionable than the more traditional "dualist" view of John Wesley's, neither view enjoys indisputable scientific confirmation. By assuming the philosophical theories they do, neither theologian is free from metaphysics. Arthur Schopenhauer acknowledged that the source of the knowledge of the will came from within man and not from the observable.⁹⁷

Nonetheless, both theologians are sure their view is the correct one. Well they must, for each one's assumptions are necessary for the success of his concept of faith. John Wesley's understanding accents the uniqueness of man as a spirit corporealised who may have intercourse with the transcendent being God. Rudolf Bultmann's formulation stresses willful action in the

human concrete situation. His understanding is agreeable to a scientific community which finds "dualism" too problematic and inhibiting to its pursuit.

However, that Rudolf Bultmann can assert a philosophic materialism on behalf of Scripture results from an imaginative re-interpretation which is doubtful. Moreover, there is some irony in the fact that he seeks to make a case for man's utter uniqueness while assuming a philosophic theory which taken to its logical conclusion would see man as a simple animal. Nonetheless, he attempts to locate man's specialness elsewhere.

CHAPTER TWO

FAITH

INTRODUCTION

In their descriptions of faith, the two theologians claim the Apostle Paul as the authority and standard. Though the book of Romans is strategic for both Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley, both theologians can also draw from John. However, John Wesley appropriates other New Testament books (particularly Ephesians and Hebrews) as important sources for his authoritative understanding of faith.

Rudolf Bultmann set forth a thorough, exegetical study of the cognates of "faith" πίστις in the New Testament. John Wesley, though he was familiar with the Greek New Testament, never does. Both also draw from other historical sources. Although, Rudolf Bultmann alludes to Martin Luther, Wilhelm Herrmann, Karl Barth, and Martin Heidegger, his formulation of faith is reliant upon these only in so far as they enable him to arrive at his own independent, interpretive synthesis.

For his understanding of faith, John Wesley readily consults and is more closely dependent upon various authorities than Rudolf Bultmann. He learned from the Moravians, especially Peter Böhler, from the Church's Articles and Homilies, from the English Puritans and divines such as Richard Baxter and John Goodwin, whom he accepted as articulating accurately the Apostle's Gospel. Though John Wesley's formulation is not without his own contribution, his is by no means as original as Rudolf Bultmann's.

The essence of Rudolf Bultmann's conception of faith remained constant at least from the point where his publishing activity in the latter 1920's begins to show some attention to "faith".⁹⁸ However, though for John Wesley the essential constituent ingredients of faith are present from 1738, the interpretation of the various species or gradations of faith ("saving faith", "the assurance of faith", et cetera) shifted over his lifetime. In contrast, though

Rudolf Bultmann mentions in passing that faith has "degrees" of strength, "faith" is simple and monolithic for him.

For John Wesley, "faith" is essentially an inner "conviction", a "testimony of God's Spirit", a "revelation of Christ" to the individual's soul.⁹⁹

THE RELATION OF FAITH TO ITS OBJECT

Faith asserts a condition of direct, inter-personal relations between the believer and the supernatural, personal Being God in Jesus Christ who initiates these relations. The "testimony of God's Spirit" or the "revelation of Christ" is the transcendent God personally "speaking" or conveying His saving message to men.¹⁰⁰

For John Wesley, the object of faith is not merely the saving event or proclamation per se, but the actual Person, the living Jesus Christ and His atoning benefits.¹⁰¹ The object of faith is God's saving deed in Jesus Christ as it is the event which actually brings the bodily risen Jesus Christ in all His reality and His attending benefits to the individual believer in time-space.

Rudolf Bultmann rejects this as being inconceivable. "Faith" for him cannot be a direct or "mystical" relationship to Jesus because the Jesus of Nazareth of the apostles Paul and John is dead. In spite of Rudolf Bultmann's involved explanation of why "believe in" should not be interpreted literally but as "believe that", one ought to consider this assumption of a dead Jesus central to his choice of interpretation. The object of faith is not a person but a proclamation, the eschatological act of God in Christ. "Jesus Christ" is only a metonym for the proclamation. More specifically, the object of faith is not the flat proclamation but the proclamation which becomes the eschatological act of God when man is summoned by the proclamation and man resolves to accept it as God's saving word. Hence the definition of faith which is common to the various stages of New Testament development is not trust in a dead man Jesus but to "consider" credible, or "the acceptance of the kerygma".

Each theologian's understanding of the object of faith and the nature of the believer's relation to it provides an interesting study. Existentialists such as Rudolf Bultmann are critical of the cultural, ontological world-view (such as John Wesley is deemed to assume) which they maintain depersonalizes man and treats him as another object among objects. Existentialists make a fundamental distinction between how a person understands and relates practically to his everyday world of objects and how a person should understand and relate to himself and others. How Rudolf Bultmann conceives this relation is reflected in his conception of faith's relation to its object. Let us briefly put Rudolf Bultmann's formulation in perspective.

In his notable construct (to which Rudolf Bultmann alludes), Martin Buber identifies this existential dichotomy of relating as the "I-It" and "I-Thou" relations. Similarly, Martin Heidegger identifies the former relation as Besorgen (practical concern) and the latter one as Fürsorge (personal concern).¹⁰² In trying to determine the characteristics constitutive of an existentialist, personal relation, Martin Buber offers some clues. He states that the "I-Thou" relation is an authentic and personal relation because it incorporates the following characteristics: firstly, one who has an "I-Thou" relation relates with his whole being and totally in wholeness and openness; secondly, the relation is dialogical in that there is a willingness to listen as well as to speak. The "I-Thou" relationship speaks mainly of the relationship between selves, though it does not preclude such a relationship between a person and nature. However, to speak of "relationship" seems to be confined to that between persons.¹⁰³

Do John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's accounts of faith prescribe a fundamental encounter of existence which is personal? When Rudolf Bultmann discounts the possibility of a faith relation between a person and a God who is Person, he precludes a faith relation which would include all the components noted above of personal relation. Indeed, he does stress that the relation involves the whole being. However, he also assumes that the believer

relates to an enigmatic "mana"-laden statement rather than a Self. This, to my mind, devalues the believer's "relation" to the transcendent to something less personal than the relation between two humans which is truly interpersonal. Moreover, the transcendent relation could be dialogical only in a metaphorical sense and not in a real sense as in the human relation. It could not consist of a developing chain of mutual, personal interaction such as can exist between two persons.

Rudolf Bultmann appears to guard himself from such a criticism by claiming the Word is not from this world. Moreover, the Word has the character of "being-there-with-me" (though it cannot be considered another world-object within the world, it has the character of being a personal co-existent with me). Nevertheless, accepting that the Word is not of the world, he repudiates any claim that this Word is constituted of the qualities identified with personhood. He does not describe a relationship capable of authentic interpersonal relations between a person and the transcendent because this would be to speak mythologically. Personalisation also includes the consideration one person gives another person in viewing him or her in particular as special and standing out from the surrounding crowd, other objects and things.

In the encounter of faith proposed by Rudolf Bultmann, man is "challenged" and "judged" by an incomprehensible, non-personal authority with no personality, personal will, rational thought, or "heart". Being confronted by a personal tyrant or a mythological Person might seem a relief - at least one would have a "face" with whom to associate the command. Certainly, Rudolf Bultmann's formulation does not envisage any exchange of love between the transcendent and the believer. His formulation forfeits the historic Judeo-Christian identity of the people of God as in fact the children of the personal God. His interpretation of the faith relationship -- even if it be rationalized as not from this world -- fails to be as inspiring as other genuine relationships available in "this world".

John Wesley's affirmation promises man that the primary ontological relationship of existence is truly a personal one. Beyond the seemingly lonely and terrifying impersonal void, man might be assured of ultimate, personal connectedness with the transcendent person God. Man should enter into this relationship with his whole being and expect a dialogical communication with God. Nonetheless, John Wesley is not an existentialist after the model of Martin Buber.

For Rudolf Bultmann, the above description is an example of the dream he is trying to overcome. Man must face the fact that he is alone. By shattering the illusion that he is not alone, man may answer the problem of his isolation and be personalized. He rejects the historic Christian claim that faith entails a personal relationship with God. He might have wondered how a "relationship" could be described as "personal" when the qualities and dynamics of such a relationship were absent and the believer was speaking to the Beyond in a monologue.

However, from the classical, Christian viewpoint, by depriving faith of its personal relation with God, the existentialist ironically depersonalizes not only man's encounter with the transcendent but man's entire existence.

FAITH: HUMAN/DIVINE

Though John Wesley allows for the necessity of free will in saving faith, nonetheless, his account of saving faith as an inner, God-wrought consciousness places the accent of faith on man as having something done for, to, and in him. Contrariwise, allowing that Rudolf Bultmann accepts that faith is a gift in that the proclamation gives one the opportunity to decide, nevertheless, his account of faith as deciding for the saving proclamation emphasises man's doing and willing something rather than God's bestowal of something on man.

For John Wesley, man's reception is the complement of God's activity. For Rudolf Bultmann, God's demand is the complement of man's response. For

John Wesley, reception implies God's absolutely necessary, sovereign initiative and dispensing activity and man's corresponding active passivity. For Rudolf Bultmann, response implies a passive activity in which man wills to act and to respond to a demand in order to establish that a divine encounter has occurred. In this case, faith is man achieving a new self-understanding through his own self-projected action upon the proclamation which enables him to see himself in a new way as being encountered by God. However, while John Wesley accepts that faith brings a new self-understanding, faith involves God returning from out of Himself the verdict of an actual, new, objective state of reconciliation which exists between the believer and Himself.

Indeed, according to Rudolf Bultmann, God in Christ has taken the initiative by making salvation accessible by calling man into question by the Word. The occurrence of faith involves a prior demand placed upon man by an authoritatively confrontational God. Nonetheless, the actual burden of weight is placed upon man as the "man called into question" rather than upon the God who calls into question. God's "gift" is merely God's calling man into question, thereby placing the primary burden of action on man, forcing him to act for his salvation. Faith for Rudolf Bultmann is devoid of any in-coming, outside rational influence laden with informational content to transfer to man or any intelligent, energetic power capable of interacting with, acting upon or within man.

Contrariwise, John Wesley's account assumes this. Faith for John Wesley is God offering and presenting to the individual the ontological gift of His own personal, salvic love released through Jesus Christ's atoning death. God's desire, His capacity, and His real, present readiness to bestow gracious favour upon the individual logically and temporally antedate the believer's awareness and reception of His atoning love. In other words, for John Wesley God is actually offering "me" the grace that can be known as grace before I receive and recognize that it is grace. John Wesley's account of faith stresses the Giver and literal, supernatural gift -- that which is transferred and is out-

going from a giving-out God and is received and in-going to in-receiving man.¹⁰⁴

For Rudolf Bultmann, such an ontological divine gift cannot exist prior to faith. There is no personal God offering man an intentional invitation to personal reconciliation which man can receive as he would an offer of friendship from a neighbour. Faith is not a transaction carried out by God which man fulfills by an actual reception. Faith is essentially man's will to decide to interpret the proclamation in a certain way. In summary, for John Wesley the principal agent (though indeed man is not uninvolved) in faith is the supranatural God. For Rudolf Bultmann, it is man (though the transcendent God is involved).

The analysis just expressed is corroborated by Karl Barth's judgment. He queries how far the kerygma as conceived by Rudolf Bultmann really speaks, as it is intended to speak, of an act of God. He wonders if it does not rather speak, strictly speaking, of an act of man in which man moves from the "old" determination to the new determination by the achievement of his own obedience (though he is suppose to be incapable of it). Does he mean more than that the content of the kerygma should be accepted by us as "the law of our decision"? ¹⁰⁵ Fritz Buri criticizes Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation in much the same way. He states that the manner in which Rudolf Bultmann interprets the kerygma of God's saving event in Christ threatens to dissolve it into "a mere human self-understanding".¹⁰⁶

One sees here again in microcosm their two epistemological approaches: John Wesley's approach which assumes that an outside stimulus conveys meaning to the subject is again the one explicated by Thomas Aquinas and John Locke; Rudolf Bultmann's approach accepts that outside sensation is devoid of meaning until man transforms it by his interpretation. This method harks back to Immanuel Kant.¹⁰⁷

FAITH: MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE?

Moving to another issue, Rudolf Bultmann repudiates teaching which allowed faith to be a religious or mystical experience. Perhaps in contending for this he wants to disavow the parallel between the faith he promotes and other commonly described religious and mystical experiences. Faith for him cannot be "an affect" or a "religious process" because it is not an emotional state or disposition of body or mind.¹⁰⁸ Faith is not having an elevated religious feeling or a consciousness associated with some claimed intercourse with God (as in Gnosticism).¹⁰⁹ Not only is it not a present reality within (any circumstance of) human existence, the "Beyond" does not impinge upon the believer. Having faith cannot be affirmed of any man.

Rudolf Bultmann's proposal of the encounter of faith does disclaim "mysticism" as viewed as a union with the transcendent which carries with it the inner sense of God's presence. Nonetheless, one may describe his concept of faith as touching mysticism at least at a particular point. Namely, his concept is not dissimilar to a type of mysticism which has been called "mystery-mysticism" by John Tinsley, who finds it elucidated in Paul Tillich's concept of the process of revelation.¹¹⁰

Rudolf Bultmann asserts that there is a real historical happening, or a concrete situation ("the sign-event"), in which man is encountered by the Word's demand. This "sign-event" or concrete occurrence is perceived as a sign as a result of "ecstasy". Paul Tillich states that this "ecstasy" is more than mere experience or a realization of some truth which could be reached by discursive reason. Rather, it is a "special turn of mind, having its own coercive character".¹¹¹ In Rudolf Bultmann's case, this concrete happening is interpreted as a sign as a result of man's decision to view it this way.

Moreover, recalling Martin Luther's conception, faith for Rudolf Bultmann is not common experience of the visible world in the sense of the individual passing through an event which affects him on the inside or in which a sensation from without comes to him. Notwithstanding this, one may still

suggest labeling it "experience" in that it is an event which the individual passes through and in which he recognizes that he has been qualified.¹¹²

While for Martin Luther, this "experience" of "authentic" faith was not an experience of the common, sense experience variety, nevertheless he did understand this faith to be an "experience" of a new dimension.¹¹³

Rather, he, with Martin Luther's conscious explicitness, distinguishes it from the inner spiritual "feeling", the inward impression on the soul deriving from the supernatural grace of Jesus Christ. However, John Wesley does not emphasize the dialectical opposition between natural sense experience and spiritual experience as do Martin Luther and Rudolf Bultmann but rather he emphasizes their similarities. Indeed, formulating a positive description of the religious impression is not easy for any to make. John Wesley could only describe it by analogy to sense experience. Stating laconically the differences between the two, he assumes as the others do that it authenticates itself to the believer.

In any case, John Wesley contrary to Rudolf Bultmann is not afraid to assert that saving faith is an inner experience of spiritual consciousness.¹¹⁴ Like the Catholic mystics, the Puritans and the German Pietists before him, this understanding is suggestive of a type of mysticism in which it is maintained the believer has an unmediated, direct experience of God in Jesus Christ.¹¹⁵ It would seem to be differentiated from Rudolf Bultmann's mysticism in that Rudolf Bultmann's "experience" was connected necessarily with a particular "sign-event", a concrete situation -- one's encounter with the proclamation -- whereas John Wesley's was not.¹¹⁶ However, though both theologians denounce "mysticism", they both resemble, each in his own way, a certain type of "mysticism" in that they accept that a disclosure of God is made to faith in the individual's "experience".

Rudolf Bultmann dismisses the kind of religious experience which John Wesley proposes none the least on the ground that there is no supra-objective reality, e.g. the Triune God, who is said to reveal Himself in man or history.

Even if there were such an entity, finite man has no criteria by which to judge the Infinite's presence.

John Wesley claims we have criteria: Holy Scripture, reason and the inner, supra-sensuous faculty, the soul. Rudolf Bultmann's assumption that finite man cannot rationally know the Infinite is philosophically logical but is itself based upon the unverified supposition that there is in fact no Infinite, Person God who has invested the creation with a quality or qualities which reflect His eternity and divinity or provided the human faculties with capabilities, capacities, or structures for perceiving His transcendent Being. He assumes that there is no God who is able and active in communicating some rational understanding of His Infinite Being and no receptor within man to receive it. Of course, John Wesley has to make these assumptions in order to maintain his understanding of faith.

One observes that these opposing assumptions of John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann are just that: foundational assumptions. Neither is a result of empirical, scientific verification and neither could claim a certainty supported by empirical science. Just as John Wesley with apparently absolute confidence asserts who God is and that and what He reveals, so Rudolf Bultmann with every bit as much assurance describes in an a priori "negative way", who and what God cannot be. John Wesley tells us he has achieved his understanding by Holy Scripture aided by enlightened reason and inspiration. Rudolf Bultmann seemingly achieved his negative, dogmatic understanding by ratiocination.

John Wesley is in the predicament of not being able to prove that anything he says positively about God in any way corresponds to such an existent. Thus, that it is divinely inspired is an open question. That it is sound reason may also be questioned because we cannot verify that reason which is based on the logic and experience of this visible world in fact corresponds to what may be the transcendent world. Nonetheless, John Wesley reasoned in the sense that from Scriptural premises he drew

deductions which he believed were verified by experience.

However, on the other hand, could Rudolf Bultmann achieve an understanding of what God is rationally or scientifically since by his proposition one cannot ratiocinate about God via these routes? He could not know what he affirms by faith since faith for him does not enlighten intellectually. He seems too wary to have been so conclusive at this point. He would probably counter by stating he was not reasoning about God, but about man's false imaginations of what man supposes him to be. Perhaps he felt if he acknowledged even the possibility of a God and revelation such as John Wesley put forward, then the force of his theological declaration would be weakened. However, I rather think that the kind of "objectifying" that John Wesley engaged in was so objectionable and irksome to him that he was sure it could not be true.¹¹⁷

FAITH: REVELATION

Though Rudolf Bultmann allows that revelation occurs in faith, it is a revelation which bears little resemblance to the classical theological understanding. Much of what he discounts about the classical concept of revelation had been discussed by the Deists of John Wesley's day. Doubtlessly, among other things, he differed from the Deists according to philosophical framework, the doctrine of God, and in his re-interpretation of revelation as a disclosure of new existential self-understanding.

However, in effect, both advocated a genuine, Christian religion which did not need a supernational disclosure laden with supra-rational content from outside the world-historical natural order.

Deists such as Matthew Tindal typically reasoned that since revelation was a mere duplicate of what was already written on the hearts of men, it was superfluous.¹¹⁸ They were not first concerned to show the scientific impossibility of positive revelation but its unreasonableness.¹¹⁹ However, for Rudolf Bultmann it was both scientifically impossible and unreasonable.

Though the thesis of Conyers Middleton's A Free Inquiry Into The Miraculous Powers asserted that miracles ceased after the close of the New Testament period, John Wesley astutely recognized that latent in Conyers Middleton's argument were the seeds (which in fact would flower in the likes of Rudolf Bultmann) of the further thesis "that no miracles were wrought by Christ or His Apostles".¹²⁰

John Wesley was at pains to defend the reality beyond sense and time for reasons, not the least of which was, that the supernatural and the revelation derived therefrom were integral to saving faith as he conceived it.¹²¹ He rhetorically asked, "Is there any conversion that is not miraculous?" (He stated he was not able to distinguish between a supernatural and a miraculous work).¹²² He argued against Conyers Middleton and affirmed that the faith through which the promise comes is "a power ... to see through that veil into the world of spirits, into things invisible and eternal".¹²³ He queried Conyers Middleton's knowledge of the Beyond. Was his "knowledge any more than bare conjecture?" he asked.¹²⁴

John Wesley suggested the reason for his ignorance was "You have no senses suitable to invisible or eternal objects." ¹²⁵ If he argued this way with the eighteenth century likes of Conyers Middleton who attacked the supernatural by innuendo and implication, certainly he would not have been happier with the direct denials of Rudolf Bultmann.

Even though the era of historical and biblical criticism was only just beginning in John Wesley's day, the disparity in theological enlightenment between his age and Rudolf Bultmann's can be overstated. Though living through the catastrophe of two world wars and the complexity of modernity, Rudolf Bultmann's confidence in his modern theology assumes the air of the late nineteenth-twentieth century optimism which viewed man as finally "come of age". Interpretations, such as John Wesley's, which themselves were confident in their affirmations, are summarily dismissed as age-encrusted, if not obsolete. Like those in the eighteenth century who viewed the ages prior

to themselves as outdated in comparison, in some ways Rudolf Bultmann in the twentieth century displayed an attitude of centuricism. Even in his own day, John Wesley was accused by "John Smith" of returning to "old and exploded expositions" of the past seventeenth century.¹²⁶ John Wesley comments in regard to John Taylor's attempted refutation of the doctrine of original sin that after 1700 years a sweet-tongued orator arose who had more wisdom than all past ages.¹²⁷

As pertains to the issue of the miraculous and supernatural reality, John Wesley was not uninitiated and not undecided regarding the fundamental assumptions which then and now undergird the criticism of supernatural revelation and the miraculous. He had read George Campbell's Dissertation On Miracles which examined David Hume's argument in his short treatise "Of Miracles".¹²⁸ David Hume already had anticipated the doctrine of "analogy" (the recognition of anything proceeds by comparing it with our current experiences of life and our understanding of the way things work) which is one of Rudolf Bultmann's presuppositions in his denial of supranaturalism.¹²⁹

The passing of two hundred years has not advanced Rudolf Bultmann's evidence or argument to the point that John Wesley would be required by necessity to abandon his position. In fact, Rudolf Bultmann does not in a single work attempt a reasoned debunking of the supernatural and miraculous. However, his disparagement of them is expressed throughout his writings. One might say with justification that one of the motivations of his total theological formulation is to deliver Christian faith from the supernatural and its dependence upon it. As Schubert Ogden and Karl Barth show, the problem that Rudolf Bultmann determined faced him as a theologian was how to explicate for modern man, who assumes a scientific and technological world-view, the understanding revealed in the New Testament which assumes a mythological world-picture.¹³⁰ He confidently assumes that in the light of der Zeitgeist with its current philosophical and scientific thinking a polemic against the supernatural was quite superfluous.¹³¹ If John Wesley conversed

with Rudolf Bultmann, would he issue to him the challenge he made Thomas Church to prove there was no supernatural power at work among his hearers?¹³²

It is highly doubtful whether or not either theologian could offer the other sufficient reason or evidence to persuade him to accept the position contrary to his own. Each theologian examined reality and assimilated it according to an already assumed philosophical, biblical, and theological world-view (albeit, Rudolf Bultmann does not accept that his analysis is a "world view").

FAITH: CONFIDENCE OR DOUBT?

A marked contrast between John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the nature of saving faith is observed in their consideration of whether saving faith is "confidence" or the surrender of confidence. Assuredly for John Wesley saving faith is an assured, Divine persuasion registered within a person that a particular, favourable state of relations exists between God and the believer (God is favourably disposed toward "me").¹³³

Contrariwise, Rudolf Bultmann, not without the flavour of Martin Luther, asserts the opposite: faith is the abandonment of all security. For him, security is indicative of the old existence and the attitude of "care". The person who tries according to "this world" to make his life secure in terms of or by himself is one who turns away from the Creator. He has "dread" which is unresponsiveness to the future and an unwillingness to surrender to what is a mystery to him. Because he cannot bear to look into the void, he rejects the call to decision to risk himself and seeks a possession (what is in John Wesley's theology an inner "conviction") which he attempts to call his own and from which he takes comfort. For Rudolf Bultmann, faith is not a matter of exchanging a wrong security for a new right security. Faith is not a matter of being convinced intellectually or emotively. Faith is inherently uncertainty -- a constant striving, a never having arrived, a constantly being threatened by the past and being made anxious by an unpredictable future.

That John Wesley was, particularly in 1738, a man who could not bear to live in uncertainty before God and who tried to secure his life before Him, is borne out in the Journal entries. His fear was essentially a psycho-spiritual fear. According to the Journal, he feared death and his own dying as it was inextricably bound to the God who would judge the dead. However, rather than thinking he secured his life according to a sinful theological explication, he believed after Aldersgate he was finally viewing himself according to the Scriptures.

The anxiety or dread envisaged by Rudolf Bultmann dovetails a psychological fear of death with a technical, existential, philosophical exposition of ontological uncertainty. Though he approached the paradoxical nature of faith in relation to the common experience of anxieties and troubles like Martin Luther, Rudolf Bultmann differed from Martin Luther in that Martin Luther allowed faith to have experiential certainty.¹³⁴

Nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann has articulated in a compelling way a concern which persons recognize as their own and with which they struggle. He makes a powerful case for the radical insecurity of man's existence. Whether or not it is man's only or primary concern is not immediately relevant.

Both theologians interpret literally, as far as it goes, the Apostle Paul's argument that faith surrenders its confidence in its own power and renounces the attainment of righteousness by its own strength. Rudolf Bultmann expands upon this using the existential description to "light up" man's fundamental insecurity in an existential relation. John Wesley uses the description of man's spiritual and moral inability to keep the will of God to show his insecurity before God.

In coming to the positive translation of the term faith as "confidence", John Wesley translates the Scriptural term in a literal fashion, whereas Rudolf Bultmann interprets it according to existential, philosophical analysis.

Each theologian further explicates authentic faith on the basis of his prior assumptions regarding the nature of history and ontological transcendence. On the grounds of an existential philosophy and a historical-critical philosophy of history, Rudolf Bultmann states that no personal mind or will who foreknows the future and is able purposefully to intervene in or to orchestrate historical events according to a willful intention and desired outcome is outside or inside history. Even if the existence of such a Being were possible, man does not know about it and so practically the situation is unchanged. There is no Guarantor of the future in whom man can be confident. Therefore, one cannot predict with confidence one's future based on one's past and present.

Rudolf Bultmann does profess that the analysis of one level of history (what Wilhelm Dilthey referred to as "outer history"), which includes a process of single events connected by a chain of cause and effect, renders results with scientific objectivity and dependability. He acknowledges there are certain "powers" (human passions, socio-economic needs, and ideas) which operate on historical process and of which one can become aware.¹³⁵

However, in regards to ascertaining historical meaning (the "inner" history), the objectivity of "natural science" cannot be obtained and is, in any case, an unsuitable method for determining meaning.

Yet, history on both levels for Rudolf Bultmann is ultimately unpredictable, blind, and incalculable. The influential "powers" at work in natural history can be the ultimate result of little more than a fickle fate. Man has no clue or axiom at his disposal for assessing why some are rich and others are poor, or why one's character develops one way and not another. Moreover, man has no universal guidelines or standards which are predictive of a "mind" or direction of history and which can be used accordingly by him to align himself.

Therefore, human life is insecure because there is no intelligible correlation between the transcendent Beyond and human history. Whether or

not life is anything but unpredictable is doubtful. This is a poignant perspective of existence which is not wholly unexpected from one who lived through the first half of the twentieth century in Germany.

Nonetheless, this view is not without its difficulty. On the one hand, he wants to assume that principles of causality and predictability of the order of natural history ("outer history") operate so that single events are not without connection and are connected by the orderly chain of cause and effect. On the other hand, the very existent understanding that asserts that this is true paradoxically affirms that the universe and world is a riddle which encompasses man as darkness and the uncanny.

Can the very pre-understanding that presupposes the world to be enigmatic, unpredictable, and blindly devoid of universal laws concomitantly and consistently seek and confidently assert the reality of cause and effect which bespeaks an understandable and predictably effectual relationship between events? If one affirms that one aspect of history is predictable and another is unpredictable, does not one say in so many words that the universe as a whole is incalculable? Why should we expect to find any order, historical or otherwise, in an incalculable and whimsical universe? Why should we believe anything differently than that the order we suppose we perceive is ultimately merely an illusion? On what grounds is the existential pre-understanding, which knows the universe to be essentially incalculable and cryptic, willing to believe there is a real metaphysical principle of causality governing events which links them invariably and constantly, and not willing to believe there is phenomenal succession which is invariably linked to a metaphysical, transcendent God? Does not Rudolf Bultmann when he confidently denies that security is a genuine possibility for the man of faith unconsciously affirm a concept of faith which has an implicit security? More particularly, he accepts that things can be trusted to be as he asserts them to be. In other words, there is a negative security to faith in its confident assumption that human life is assuredly incalculable and

indeterminable.¹³⁶

Indeed, is there not an implicit negative confidence and security in faith's acceptance of and resignation to a Beyond which it trusts and counts on as not only being invariably uncertain and indeterminable, but also encountering the individual in the way proposed?

To what degree is the assurance expounded by John Wesley compromised by the several, subtle theological shifts to which he subjected it? The saving faith which one could be confident saved (or excluded him) in 1745 was different from what he could be assured of saving (or excluding him) in 1748. One could be "certain" the inner confidence that one's sins were forgiven was necessary for justification in 1745 but not in 1748. So that what constituted the formal cause of salvation in 1745 was not exactly the same formal cause in 1748.

Since the inner conviction which constituted justification's threshold shifted three times over his evangelical career, the assurance of faith which was thought to be inner certainty is in retrospect seen to be to some extent uncertain. How are John Wesley's Methodist successors to determine which is the "true" view? As saving faith was the Holy Spirit's inner message to the believer, had John Wesley garbled the words?

How dependent were those who received the Holy Spirit's inner testimony under John Wesley's ministry, upon John Wesley's interpretation of it in understanding the nature of the inner impression? Assuming the Holy Spirit's word does not vary, how do we distinguish the Holy Spirit's message to the inner person from the interpretation placed upon the inner conviction by John Wesley?

For Rudolf Bultmann, human life is insecure for another reason. Man is a temporal being constantly threatened by death. That faith which seeks to lessen or cover over facticity -- such classical Christian teachings as John Wesley's, which affirm that this world's momentary affliction will be followed by an eternity of happiness -- deprives life of its existential meaning. This is

an impressive point in that the over-easy assurance of "heaven" may minimize or suppress the gravity of factual death and deny persons the opportunity to deal realistically with and let their understandings and living be addressed by their mortality.

In terms of Rudolf Bultmann's own description of what an authentic existentiell encounter is, the threat of death is constant and ever present for the existent; yet, for faith it loses its dread. One achieves in faith a detachment from dread. Though one has dread, it is as if one did not have it. They are "they that weep; as though they wept not". There is a similar paradox in the classical Christian view of John Wesley.

According to Rudolf Bultmann, faith at once resolves to accept one's "throwness" toward death and yet no longer is intimidated and afraid of death. In part the quality of the "dead" seriousness of such men as Richard Baxter or John Wesley, was each one's personal sense that he was a "dying man to dying men".¹³⁷

Of course, for John Wesley faith is felicitous not merely because it overcomes the fear of death but because in its doing so historical and eternal death are actually conquered (for Rudolf Bultmann faith's overcoming of death is not actual. Irrespective of persons, physical death is the terminus). Indeed, the recognition that the man of faith is at any moment subject to death is present. However, the distinction between John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann seems to be that for Rudolf Bultmann, the dread and threat of one's death are ever-present though one is detached from them; for John Wesley, the factive recognition that one is death-bound is present but the dread of death is actually removed. Nonetheless, one notes that the removal of fear may be only temporary or intermittent because the onset of sin may revive fear.

For Rudolf Bultmann, who has de-supernaturalized death by detaching it from so-called mythological "second death", the existent's dread is moored to his mortality. For John Wesley, God's eternal Judgment and the possibility of the "second death" which is connected with guilty sin is man's overriding

source of fear. Saving faith delivers the believer now from this Judgment, freeing him now from this principal source of fear from which even present death gets its sting.

Neither theologian's option of natural death or the "second death" as a terminus which qualifies man is founded upon indisputable evidence subject to final verification. To verify either claim entails dying -- and even then, if death is the immediate cessation of all consciousness forever, one would not be in a position to be able to provide verification.

FAITH: A POSSESSION?

According to Rudolf Bultmann, faith is not a "possession" but a profession of Jesus Christ. It is decisive agreement to the Christian claim. It is professing the proclamation by laying claim to it for oneself. Notwithstanding, though Rudolf Bultmann denies faith as a "possession", an element of possession is involved in his concept in that one owns the proclamation as applying to oneself.¹³⁸ However, he expressly excludes the nuance of possession which he describes as being able to control or have a predictive understanding or management of God.

In contrast, saving faith for John Wesley is the conveyance of a supernatural reality -- the resurrected Jesus Christ and His gracious love -- into the believer's actual possession which he previously did not have.¹³⁹ Further, John Wesley would not accept that faith is managing God but rather a participating in God's management of the believer.

FAITH: RENUNCIATION/OBEDIENCE

While both theologians allow that "faith" means "trust", each qualify the sense in which it does. John Wesley emphasizes faith as "assurance" (or "evidence") that "Christ loved me, and gave himself for me", allowing that the "trust" which is "a childlike confidence in him" follows upon this "assurance".¹⁴⁰ Both accept that "faith" can mean trust that God will perform

his promises or trust in God's miracle-working power. Though "faith" as personal reliance upon Christ's death is not the primary saving sense in Rudolf Bultmann's conception, he can describe faith's primary meaning for the Apostle Paul as "trust" in the sense of radical surrender to God's will.¹⁴¹ He re-interprets the terms pisteuein, pisteuein eis, and pisteuein epi in accordance with pisteuein oti to mean to "believe that". Consequently, faith is de-Christologized so that it does not express the classical Protestant meaning of soteriological confidence in the Person Jesus Christ. Though Rudolf Bultmann does not always designedly and consciously delineate the one faith in its two movements or two voices, one can discern, if one may call it such, an active and a passive voice. He states that faith is primarily "obedience".¹⁴² His full-orbed understanding of faith as "obedience" seems to include two aspects which can be systematized (albeit, Rudolf Bultmann does not do so) into a passive and active voice.

In this regard, he is reminiscent of Martin Luther who said that in order for God to save He must damn. For when lightning strikes, said Martin Luther, it both slays the man and turns his face toward heaven.¹⁴³ Likewise, for Rudolf Bultmann, faith is also both submission to God's judgment, the renunciation of all boasting (the passive voice), and also "acceptance", "confession", the laying hold of the world above (the active voice).¹⁴⁴ Faith as obedience is radical, pure surrender in which one turns away from oneself and renounces one's own existence and lays oneself at God's disposal for the act to which He summons one.¹⁴⁵ This renouncing is at the foundation a rejecting of the past world-view, the old Greek "subject-object" ontology, rather than a repentance such as one finds in John Wesley. Nonetheless, both theologians give place in the process of salvation to a disowning and disclaiming of one's "own righteousness" and past sinful state.

At any rate, their concepts are different in several ways. The moment of acknowledgement and disavowal of past sin would be described by John Wesley as "repentance" and would precede, as in typical Roman Catholic

theology, faith, since the two were distinct in thought.¹⁴⁶ Although Calvinists affirmed that repentance followed faith and Martin Luther is ambiguous on the issue, Rudolf Bultmann diverged from them all by declaring "renunciation" to be equated with faith.¹⁴⁷

Furthermore, one must note that given these differences, "renunciation" for Rudolf Bultmann is not equivalent to the traditional understanding of "repentance". His system allows no room as John Wesley and other Reformers do for the psycho-spiritual sorrow of contrition for wronging God. Though both theologians declare that man is judged, Rudolf Bultmann disavows any judgment of moral wrong and does not relate it to the fear of eternal Judgment and hell.

Faith for Rudolf Bultmann is also an "obedience" in the active voice of "confession" or "acceptance of the kerygma". In contrast to "renunciation" which denotes passive resignation, "acceptance" signifies the active resolve to "give credence" to the proclamation.¹⁴⁸ "Acceptance" is the assertive, volitional decision to take the divine grace for oneself.¹⁴⁹ It is an urgent, non-thinking, volitional resolve to accept an imperative command. In comparison, John Wesley's concept of active faith is a penitent reception of an inner impression in the soul transmitted from God.

Consequently, faith's emphasis for Rudolf Bultmann may be characterized as decisive reflex. For John Wesley, it is ready reception. Whereas for Rudolf Bultmann man is essentially agent in faith, for John Wesley man is primarily subject, one who is dependent. John Wesley stresses the gracious activity of the transcendent, personal God in Jesus Christ within the receiving individual's inner man. Notwithstanding this, one hastens to say Rudolf Bultmann's faith is not without its sense of reception and John Wesley's not without its decisive urgency.¹⁵⁰

Faith for Rudolf Bultmann accents the individual's, reactive, impulsive taking of a word spoken to him. "Obedience" projects itself and comes to its own self-understanding on account of its "forethrow". Taking into account the

fact that Rudolf Bultmann does state that faith is God's "gift", we, nevertheless, conclude that his proposal ultimately leaves the burden of obtaining the new self-understanding with man himself. The nature of man's existence lies primarily with man's decisive choice of perception rather than with a super-objective, autonomous, sovereign God with an unfettered will. The human self determines how the proclamation is to be understood and invests it with any meaning it is to have. Contrarily, according to John Wesley, the Gospel meaning is both revealed and communicated to the individual by God. Only secondarily is the human will -- enabled by God's grace -- involved.

However, one might wonder if John Wesley, in his close identification of God's saving activity with man's psychological sensitivity, had also left the obtaining of faith to a subjective human perception. Theologians like Rudolf Bultmann abandon the notion of "supernatural" activity as superfluous, reducing the obtaining of faith implicitly and essentially to human activity. Though Rudolf Bultmann does seem to accept that some occult "force" (mana) inhabits the proclamation, this does not alter the judgement that obtaining faith rests primarily upon man's volitional activity. John Wesley's faith in true Protestant fashion claims pre-eminently to be the result of divine activity (though, not all classical Protestants will agree with his qualification of the claim since he asserts the free response of an empowered will). Admittedly, it is difficult to demonstrate that it is anything more than human activity.

The passive activity of Rudolf Bultmann's proposed faith demonstrates an unqualified submission to and acceptance of a command. Upon whose authority is the imperative issued? How does one know that the proclamation which encounters one is a demand of God's to be obeyed in faith? Rudolf Bultmann states that one does not know prior to faith. This ignorance is integral to faith. The one who is encountered by the demand has no reason or criteria by which to discriminate between this command and other commands.

Nonetheless, one may observe that the demand is not completely devoid of rational support. It has an implicit reason for its acceptance: it says so. Nevertheless, how can one know without a prior judgment that the proclamation is a demand to be obeyed and not simply a proposition to be taken literally? Can one really expect it to be proclaimed or approached as an ultimate Word of God when no one knows, avows to know, or can know outside his own decision that it is the ultimate Word of God? Rudolf Bultmann wants it to have Word of God status in the traditional sense while at the same denying it to have such. He wants to understand the proclamation as having intrinsic authority while in reality giving it only the ascribed authority it receives from one willing to accept it as an authority.

One might say that Rudolf Bultmann's proposition is a caricature and de-supernaturalized version of a traditional argument represented by John Wesley. In approaching the traditional argument, Rudolf Bultmann assumes that there have not been and are no correlating reasons or accompanying visible- historical world evidences or mighty wonders from a "supernatural" realm which attest or confirm the proclamation as the Word of God. Given this assumption, when the proclamation was proclaimed by the traditionalist to be the Word of God, all that Rudolf Bultmann would in fact accept could be known as transpiring was that human words were being spoken and human words were being received and interpreted. From this demythologized perspective, the ultimate rationale for the traditionalist position would reduce to no more than is proposed by Rudolf Bultmann: the Word of God is the Word of God because it is accepted to be such. Rudolf Bultmann believed this was all that one could finally say because there was no objective, world-historical evidence that one could or ought to produce to demonstrate and authenticate the preaching as the Word of God.

However, there is still a subtle difference between a traditionalist such as John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann. For John Wesley, faith was more than the determination to view something as truth that may or may not be so.

Faith entailed the conviction that the proclamation was an operative, inherent truth prior to existentiell, saving faith as well as in saving faith. Faith was not a invitation to determine the proclamation's quality or nature by human fiat, but to realize the nature that it already was.

It is concordant with John Wesley's theology to accept that the Scriptural testimonies of the apostles Paul and others did not so much call others to take them as the Word of God but they declared them to be the Word of God which must be taken as such. For the Word of God is the Word of God not merely because it is taken for that in faith, but because it attested itself in time-space as being God's Word.

John Wesley would not accept Rudolf Bultmann's contention that if any verification of the proclamation had occurred, faith would be annulled because it would not be radical dependence but trusting in the flesh. On the one hand, he did not accept that miracles provided "effectual" or "conclusive" proof which necessarily forced faith, although they could be supportive of and congruent with faith.¹⁵¹ Nevertheless, attestation by miracles did not contravene the spiritual principle and the liberum arbitrium involved in belief and disbelief. One might doubt that John Wesley's faith is as easy a proposition as Rudolf Bultmann might make it out to be. The unbeliever in Rudolf Bultmann's system confidently knows there are no miracles. However, the unbeliever in John Wesley's understanding confronts a situation in which an inexplicable, extraordinary event presents him with more than one possibility for decision and action.

Though John Wesley affirms there is no final, conclusive proof for faith, he accepts that faith was given evidence of its supernatural origin, not only in New Testament times but throughout history. Faith was no less empty of supernatural, sensuous verification (most particularly in inner experience) in the eighteenth century person than in the New Testament believer.¹⁵² Moreover, saving faith's result in changing a sinner from darkness to light and its manifestation in the outward man was a self-evident testimony to

God's extraordinary activity in the realm of visible history.¹⁵³

One may wish to argue that what he claims to be "evidence" of the supernatural must nevertheless be believed to be such.¹⁵⁴ Further, even if such evidence appeared to be wondrously "inexplicable", it would not necessarily be proof that it was "supernatural". It might be a happening which reason would one day explain. Moreover, some would question John Wesley by asking: Given a supernatural occurrence, in what way could it be linked to his particular theology?

Contrariwise, according to Rudolf Bultmann, faith offers no corroborating attestation to the words which summon it. Ironically, he belongs to an existential movement which rebels from passive obedience to unquestioned authority; yet, he calls for an absolute obedience to an authority which may not be questioned and which has no criterion in visible history to commend it.

Certainly, he has a rationale for accepting one authoritative claim rather than another. John Wesley accepts a supernatural God and other assumptions prior to saving faith on mainly theological grounds; Rudolf Bultmann makes a pre-decision to decide preceding existentiell resolve to accept the proclamation's authority on philosophical and scientific grounds. He can assert that obedience disavows critical thinking and assessment of criteria because such thinking to which one has to assent has already occurred as prior groundwork to unquestioning faith. Hence, has he really overcome the problem of "two faiths"?

FAITH: INDIVIDUAL

In any event, the power of both of these theologies lay in their bringing anew in their own generations "genuine religion", "authentic existence" to the individual. As a sort of moderate realist, John Wesley, in distinction from Rudolf Bultmann, perceived an individual's justification by faith to be a single species of the general, universal salvation of God wrought in Jesus Christ. He pictured salvation as existing in reality on a general, transcendent,

supernatural level in which the past event of Jesus Christ's death is an ever-active, ever-present, ontological reality. Among other things, for example, atoning salvation was subsisting and prevailing for all of humankind in that all persons are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin and are invested with the power of arbitrium to resist temptation.¹⁵⁵

Contrarily, Rudolf Bultmann is adamantly "nominalist" in that he rejects that existential reality resides in "universals", generalities, or what appertains to a metaphysical realm. Existential reality is only in the specific, individual existent case. It is only in the concrete, historical happening where God's demand is encountered. Man cannot know what God has done in the metaphysical realm and cannot, therefore, see himself as a specific instance of a generalization.

Allowing metaphysical universality as John Wesley does presents the difficulty of verifying that in fact an occurrence is a specific manifestation of a general, transcendent reality. On the other hand, can Rudolf Bultmann hold that every individual who encounters the proclamation is alike judged and called into question without the assumption of a generality of which each is a specific instance?

In centring "authentic existence" in individual, concrete, existence, Rudolf Bultmann achieves a radical disjunction between individuals. His existential, philosophical assumption is that if an individual existent were a species of a general class, he would be just another object in a world of objects, thereby losing his utter uniqueness as a human being.¹⁵⁶ The strength of this existential plea is in its portrayal of the uniqueness and specialness of each individual. This is an appeal not discordant with historical Protestant theology.

However, does he overplay this uniqueness? Assuredly, his commendable goal is to exalt the special place and unique being of each "I". Each "I" is irreplaceable and never interchangeable. In order to make his point, does he not over-dramatize the individual's uniqueness to the detriment of the

biological, psychological-spiritual, and sociological similarity between individuals and their kinship with natural life in the world?

Moreover, congruent with the Enlightenment but in contrast to classical, Protestant theology, he is preoccupied with man's specialness rather than God's. Going further, one wonders if the uniqueness and value he wants to accord individual man does not even supplant the uniqueness and value usually accorded the classical, Christian God.

In addition, must one accept Rudolf Bultmann's premise that unless one construes existence in existential-ontological terms, true faith can not be an individual reality? Must one accept that if his premise is true, man's individuality is lost and absorbed in the world?

May not similarity and distinctiveness co-exist? The distinctiveness of each person and the individual nature of justification is assumed in John Wesley's theological understanding. Because the transcendent, personal "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself", then one could conclude Christ "loved me, and gave himself for me". Because God loved all and Christ died for all, then God also loves each and every one.

Be that as it may, John Wesley's individualization does not comprehend man in Rudolf Bultmann's manner as an utterly distinct being. John Wesley's individualization lies in the fact that, one, each and every person, is accountable as a sinner for his own sin before God -- "he stands utterly guilty before God".¹⁵⁷ His sin is only his own sin and is attributable to no one else. He alone must answer for it before the God who personally confronts him regarding it.

God in Jesus Christ reveals Himself individually to the guilty, penitent sinner and speaks to him personally words of pardon. Every person who will believe may hear the Voice say specifically to him, "thou, even thou, art reconciled to God".¹⁵⁸ According to John Wesley, each and every person is particularly loved, chosen and marked out to be the especial recipient of God's gracious beneficence in such a manner that each person is treated as though

he alone and no one else is the sole subject of Jesus Christ's atoning work. God's focus is drawn narrowly upon the solitary individual just as Jesus singled out the haemorrhaging woman from the pressing crowd. Thus, John Wesley envisaged the intimate, antiphonic conversation, "Thou art the man! I want thee for my Lord".¹⁵⁹

Furthermore, the strength of both John Wesley's and Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation of faith is their emphasis on the necessity of faith being individual awareness. For neither was genuine, saving faith an affirmation or knowledge of a generality or abstraction. True faith did not exist for me until the object of faith was made "mine". For both, faith was the self-knowledge in which the individual person must know himself addressed by God in the historical present. Faith gave to the individual a new self-consciousness in the immediate present which he had not previously had. For both, faith was an event which happened to the individual so that he knew he was engaged by the Transcendent in his most essential being.

For John Wesley, it meant having an inner, supra-sensuous apprehension of what was described above: that Christ "loved me, and gave himself for me". The "I", the corporealized spirit in world time-space, becomes conscious that he himself is the focal point and object of God's redeeming activity in the here and now.

For Rudolf Bultmann, the new self-understanding is the individual understanding his "now" as a "now" which is qualified by the proclamation. The event for Rudolf Bultmann is the sinner choosing to accept that the proclamation is real "for me" and, in accepting it, realizing that God has judged and graced me and qualified my existence. This sense of being qualified by the demand of the "Thou" in the historical, concrete "now" was faith's new "self-understanding".

FAITH: GIFT/DECISION

In formal construction, both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann argue for a paradoxical faith which is both a "gift" and a "decision". Although, they both assert that God gives faith, how they conceive this giving is quite different. John Wesley declares that both the gift and the decision to receive the gift were directly attributable to the immediate activity of the sovereign, gracious God.¹⁶⁰ Nonetheless, man was at the same time ultimately entirely free to choose to believe. There was a mysterious, unfathomable interplay between the two mutually exclusive factors such that neither free grace nor free will was jeopardized. He was content to entrust the perplexity to the secret counsels of God. However, Rudolf Bultmann dissolved the conundrum by arguing that divine grace and freedom were not mutually exclusive factors but a unity.

Both theologians were chary of speculation. However, each had his own conception of what constituted speculation. Rudolf Bultmann disavowed interest in the issue of ontological free will versus determinism. He was not concerned with what he viewed as the speculative, philosophical discussion of how this world's potentialities of the fate to which man is exposed could be reconciled with the ability to choose one's destiny freely. He was not grasped by the concern of why some hear the preaching and some do not; why of those who hear, some believe and some do not.

He attempted to avoid the ancient knot and the sinful speculation of the likes of John Wesley by distinguishing human, existential freedom from the human, factual question of whether man is free or bound. However, has he not just substituted one metaphysical argument for another? He assumed inviolably that to exist as a human being is to be invested with the absolute freedom to make and existentiell decision. One is free to surrender oneself to the demand. Man is free because he knows in his free surrender he is given back himself to be the person he is meant to be.

Regardless of the factual situation of whether or not man is free, determined, or free and determined, he is free in his own self-understanding and in his self-perception of himself and his situation. Basically, he maintained that though intellectually the issue defied solution, man could choose to act on the basis that he does have free will. Because he can proceed upon this assumption, he does have a certain free will. His authority for this is consciously finally human: the freedom man knows he has he knows he has because he knows he has it. John Wesley argued rather that there must be free will because he believed Scripture and human reason dictated it.

In a sense, from one angle, Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley argued in a similar fashion for free will. They both appreciated that the free will/determinism debate was an enigma which led to an inconclusive cul-de-sac; nevertheless, neither could or would envisage life without free will.

Rudolf Bultmann's proposal is a positive attempt to avoid man's stultification and to prompt man to seize the opportunity rather than be seized by it. He proposes that man take on the universe. For man does not have to be merely a leaf in the contradictory winds of outward conditions and forces, but may be free in spite of them to determine his own future.

On the other hand, Rudolf Bultmann's scheme does still beg the issue. Is man really free simply because he says he is free though by any other name he is actually bound? Moreover, his formulation cannot boast of superiority over John Wesley's on the grounds that it is not metaphysical. Indeed, his view could be seen to strain to the breaking point human understanding and self-perception and its relation to reason and empirical reality.

However, the same could be said of John Wesley's viewpoint. Rudolf Bultmann could argue that because John Wesley grounds his understanding and existence on mythological assumptions about God, then a disjunction between psychological human self-perception and reality results.

Be that as it may, John Wesley's explanation is not any more divergent from what is actually known regarding this issue than Rudolf Bultmann's. Moreover, it is not without an advantage of a built-in logical guarantee: the Scriptural God.

Furthermore, Rudolf Bultmann assumes for the sake of this argument that the ontological status of man's freedom is ambiguous. One can argue that his aggressive denial elsewhere of a personal, omnipotent God leads him away from this ambiguity into a position in which the existence of true, ontological free will is more improbable and more incongruous. This in turn impugns the true value of an "existentiell" freedom.

John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann have different problems, neither of which is less mysterious, regarding faith as "gift/decision". One difficulty for John Wesley's theology is how the guilty sinner who is devoid of all moral and spiritual power to choose God is able to choose freely to receive in faith God's saving grace. How can he keep intact at once the integrity of man's radical depravity and free will and God's sovereignty?

Rudolf Bultmann's hybrid, demythologized view is divergent from that of classical Protestantism. He holds that the individual has an "innate" "fundamental will" which is free to make an existentiell decision but which is covered up by the "sporadic actual will" which is under the sway of the flesh. Only by being confronted by the saving proclamation and in resolving to accept it is man's fundamental will exercised.¹⁶¹

Though the proclamation's encounter provides the occasion for existentiell free will, from where does this ability for existentiell freedom come? How does the proclamation evoke the freedom of will which was covered up? Since the gracious proclamation does not convey or transfer to the sinner any ability to choose virtue, new quality or strength, this existentiell ability to choose must in actuality arise from the believer. Otherwise, in Rudolf Bultmann's terms the free decision would not be free. Nevertheless, he still maintains that without the proclamation which opens to man the new possibility, the man

would not have the opportunity to exert his "fundamental will" against the "sporadic actual will" and choose the new possibility.

Nonetheless, in my opinion, he does not satisfactorily account for why and how the individual under demand suddenly has the ability to reject the sinful past he heretofore has always chosen and can now resolve to act in freedom. Moreover, how can one who has as a sinner always chosen himself be free to recognize the proclamation as an offer of forgiveness? To assert that an individual is enslaved factually to sinning and yet has existential freedom does not rise above the scholastical manoeuvring from which he is trying to escape.

Ultimately, for Rudolf Bultmann, the material ability to determine to accept the proclamation as the Gospel derives from the individual whose free choice it is. He and John Wesley agree that the individual does have and must have free will to choose saving grace. Both have similar problems in accounting for this free will. Contrary to classical Protestantism, Rudolf Bultmann's explanation reduces to the assumption that every person, even under the sway of the flesh, always has the innate free will as a constitutive of being human which original sin does not destroy. He differs from John Wesley at this point in not attributing the guilty sinner's power to choose grace to the positive, immediate, outgoing influence of God upon the will.

Whereas both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann describe how faith is both "gift" and "decision", John Wesley, in spite of opinion to the contrary in his own day, in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann, shows that he puts primary weight upon God's sovereign and gracious, active role in faith and secondary weight upon man's free decision. The overriding, critical factor for him is God's unmerited grace.

Notwithstanding this, he differs from mainstream, classical Protestantism in holding that the guilty sinner chooses to receive justifying grace. If anything, the challenge for him is to demonstrate convincingly how man's free will can still have authenticity and integrity within his assumptions of God's

sovereign grace.

On the other hand, though Rudolf Bultmann insists on faith's "gift"-nature, its "gift"-nature depends not on the fact that it literally bestows anything on or contributes to the individual in an objective, outgoing presentation, but that it may be conceived by the believer as a "gift". The determining, critical factor in the event of faith for him is the free, human decision which itself chooses to receive a statement as a Gospel-proclamation and perceive it as a "gift".

He uses the term "decision" in a literal, referential sense while he uses the term "gift" in a figurative, symbolic sense. "Gift" is really just an interpretive meaning derived from "decision" taken as a literal act. One may question the analogy Rudolf Bultmann uses to explain "gift" in which the one who surrenders himself to a friend sees his friend as giving him his life. In the case of the two friends one is dealing with the interaction of two purposive human beings. However, the case is altogether different when speaking of the interaction between an individual and a proclamation.

If one could put it in these terms, John Wesley views God's gracious activity as the "efficient" cause and man's free decision as the "final" or secondary cause. Contrariwise, in Rudolf Bultmann's system man's personal resolve is the "efficient" cause and God's grace is the "final" cause. For him faith is the willing-self willing to live. For John Wesley, faith is God enabling the will to give God the occasion to save. In trying to wed an existential "voluntarism" with a classical Protestant emphasis on sovereign grace, Rudolf Bultmann leaves the Protestant teaching subservient to existential "voluntarism". A sovereign and mighty, personal God is replaced by a sovereign, virile human will.

JUSTIFICATION: NEW STATE

"Justification" for both John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann as well as for classical Protestantism is not only a momentary event but also a radically new

state of existence into which the individual is introduced.¹⁶² Rudolf Bultmann's formulation of this state is founded upon an imaginative and complicated interpretation of the eschatological preaching of Jesus and Paul which he takes as mythology construed existentially. This state assumes a conflation of what John Wesley and classical Protestants have perceived as two acts of justification. Rudolf Bultmann identifies what he accepts as God's one and only act of judgement with the eschatological "last judgement" which he asserts already occurs in the salvation-occurrence. In this event, the individual is judged and "rightwised". "World-history" of "the old age" "ends" for the justified believer so that he is "removed" out of "this world" of chronos, events, and objects. He is introduced into a believing existence of a new, eschatological history. This eschatological existence, between the "no-longer" and "the not-yet", describes the "how" of man's existence and not the "what".¹⁶³

The Jewish apocalyptic teaching which conceived of the eschaton as a cosmic, temporal-spatial event Rudolf Bultmann interprets as mythology which Paul "historicized" as individual occurrence of concrete existence. Therefore, concomitant with the "eschaton", the state of justification is outside of time and this world's existence but present now in concrete existence. Upon this assumption is founded the nature of believing existence.

Certainly, for John Wesley the act of present justification envisages a judgment being rendered in the here and now. However, present justification is not the final eschaton now revealed nor the literal end of time. The New Testament statements regarding God's acts of judgement Rudolf Bultmann conflates but John Wesley takes in the traditional twofold manner of present and final justification.¹⁶⁴ According to John Wesley, the instantaneous, punctiliar moment of present justification opens into a fundamentally new, temporal existence which itself is lived out in a chronological procession toward an ultimate eschatological justification which will follow the real end to the temporal, visible realm as we know it.

Therefore, for John Wesley, the new life proceeding from present justification correlates with the actual condition of life in world-time. Not so for Rudolf Bultmann. Believing existence cannot correspond positively with any particular condition in world-time.¹⁶⁵ His position arises from his desire to overcome the German theological situation of his day in which he perceived Christianity was too closely identified with the then present-day culture. For how could one know that Christian existence was necessarily connected with the visible world? What criteria would one use to determine it? How would one know he had the proper criteria for doing so?

Rudolf Bultmann's critic is torn between two possible interpretations. If believing existence is valued as the "better" existence, the "authentic" existence, the existence where man finds himself in contradistinction to the old existence bound to chronos and this world, then is he not promoting a believing state which is severed from the objective, material world of space-time?

Consequently, is he not implying a dualism reminiscent of Gnosticism in which the transcendent existence is absolutely distinct from "this world's" existence and in which the former is deemed "authentic" (rightwised) and the latter material existence "inauthentic" (sinful)?¹⁶⁶ That is, the existence that cannot really be known as an existence is valued as superior to that which is at hand. That raises the query: How may we know that it is superior if we cannot have the self-consciousness that we are in this state and do not have criteria by which to judge it? In addition, his emphasis on existential, eschatological existence appears by the word of it to exalt in regard to authentic existence individual self-understanding and downplay individual, objective perception in the visible world.

However, at the same time, the critic could read him as paradoxically exalting the value of this world's scholarly currency--empiricism, scientific method, and reason -- by allowing it to be the final arbiter of the intellectual content, not only of "this world" but of the transcendent sphere. It would

seem that "this world" of sinful existence, with its dread and uneasiness always and forever immediately present to the individual, is, therefore, "greater" than the eschatological existence which can never be known to the individual.

Pursuant to this, Rudolf Bultmann grants substance not to believing existence but to sinful existence. Man's sinfulness, his greed, acquisitiveness, and his seeking to secure himself by himself is readily visible in "this world". Strictly speaking, it is not known as sin until one believes; yet, a certain attitude or disposition in "this world" is directly correlated to the term "greed" which may be manifested in this visible world as "sin". He does not identify other outward, personal behaviour traditionally recognized as immoral as "sinful". In contradistinction to this, there is no such locus in visible existence which may be identified with justification and believing existence.

As Martin Luther before him, Rudolf Bultmann speaks of the justified believer as simul justus et peccator. His particular formulation arouses some interesting concerns. He appears not to explain satisfactorily how he can be a sinner who wills to secure himself by himself in the same moment that he renounces himself in faith. Further, how can he be an unabated sinner viewing the world with the old ontology at the same time as he renounces the old self-understanding and views the world with the new, existential self-understanding? The only existence that is visible is sinful existence so that even if he had renounced himself in faith he would still be seen only as one securing himself in terms of "this world".

Of course, the traditional Protestant understanding of the believer who is at once "old man"/ "new creature" is not without a contradictory nature. Notwithstanding this, Rudolf Bultmann differs from Martin Luther in that Martin Luther accepted that the "old man" could be increasingly mortified in a way that could be seen in world-time history.¹⁶⁷ One can argue that since sinful existence for Rudolf Bultmann is the only factual existence, it is the mode of existence which is seen and known always to triumph because

nothing to the contrary has or is ever known. That faith overcomes "this world" is not actual because the two realms never in fact intersect in order that the one may be seen to conquer the other.

One may find in John Wesley even after Aldersgate a nearness to Greek dualism in his suspicion of this world's legitimate passions and enjoyments. However, in comparison to Rudolf Bultmann's conception of an utterly isolated eschatological existence, what in the framework of "the old ontology" could be conceived as a spiritualizing dualism was from Rudolf Bultmann's existential-ontological perspective just another expression of "this world's" existence.

Rudolf Bultmann's view represents a considerable departure not only from the view of John Wesley's but also of other Protestants and Catholics. In regards to the life of faith, John Wesley might find Rudolf Bultmann's position akin to the Catholic, mystical idea of living by "naked faith"; that is, living by a faith which was stripped both of love, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. John Wesley contended that the believer lived by a "luminous" faith.¹⁶⁶ More specifically, he understood the state of justification to constitute an invasion of this visible world by the transcendent God. Though the heavenly kingdom and "this world" were absolutely and qualitatively distinct spheres, "this world" was not strictly isolated from God and His realm. "This world" and man in his totality of visibility, his somatic existence including his inner and outer nature, are the arena of God's gracious renewing activity.

He demonstrated in his sermon "On Divine Providence" that nothing in man's earthly life is too great or too small for God's effectual attention.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, God is so interested in man's fleshly life that He might even deviate from His own laws in order to work and involve himself in a particular person's situation. Though His being was not visible, yet the signs and marks of His invisible activity were read in the occurrences and extensiveness of "new births", the developing spiritual virtues, and moral, social behaviour, and unusual demonstrations.¹⁷⁰

Certainly, for John Wesley "the new creation" was of a quality which could be weighed and judged against the "old creation" and found superior.¹⁷¹ However, it is questionable whether John Wesley was consistent in his affirmation of this visible world. As has already been mentioned, he tended to cast a negative and suspicious eye upon sensuousness, even sensuousness which glorified God.¹⁷² Without a full appreciation of a contradiction, he, nevertheless, stressed a sensuous faith and its accompanying fruits to be felt within the believer. Notwithstanding the inconsistency, one could argue that Christian faith and its consequence as espoused by John Wesley elevated to the sacred the sphere of man's material existence with his sensuous faculties and outward social environment.

In contradistinction, Rudolf Bultmann's exposition trivializes and emasculates the transcendent by removing it from tangible history. Schubert Ogden lets him speak and defend himself by saying that because God's transcendence is not made immanent he avoids the charge of mythology.¹⁷³

From my viewpoint, by quarantining the transcendent, he by implication admits with an air of fatalism either that this visible world can only be what it is, and/or that it is acceptable as it is. The power of God through faith is not really able to transform this "old age" with its sin and evil and turn it into the "new creation" of moral, personal and social righteousness. If Rudolf Bultmann is right, one must look for an adequate explanation of the origin of the uniquely, Christian motivation to value the sick, and develop hospitals, to educate the ignorant, and develop schools, in general, to care about and for the material needs and circumstances of those who lack, want, are oppressed and/or suffer and to believe that He is able to redeem man from evil.

For John Wesley, a saving faith without resultant inward and outward fruits causally linked was no faith at all. If Rudolf Bultmann tried to get God's realm and believing existence disengaged from this world, John Wesley was insistent on engaging them. His assessment of the Moravians in this regard might well apply to Rudolf Bultmann. He claimed they let inward

religion "swallow-up outward in general".

Furthermore, the espousal of a transcendent God removed from this world would be -- and was -- abhorrent to John Wesley. Eighteenth-century rationalistic Deists accepted that, except to clarify natural religion, supernatural revelation was illegitimate and unnecessary to the natural order. There is little practical difference between this thinking and Rudolf Bultmann's.

On the wings of present justification, John Wesley envisaged God working holy reformation in the inward and outward man--sinful existence was to become holy existence. Final justification was God's in-built constraint to ensure that man cooperated in God's work.

While considerable differences of opinion exist between contemporary theologians as to the manner in which God is immanently involved in the world, nonetheless, theological fashion today rejects Rudolf Bultmann's and neo-orthodoxy's relegation of God to utter transcendence.

Be that as it may, Rudolf Bultmann's theology of justification by faith sought to extricate from difficulty this God who was said to be involved in this world. For he took seriously the modern concern of how a God active in this world could be reconciled with atrocities, catastrophic evil, and global devastation. Moreover, he challenged the authority and basis for identifying God with a particular, relative political social, or religious --in John Wesley's case--system or ideology. He pointed out the inconsistencies of the theologies which ignored the role of a supernatural, transcendent God but, nevertheless, assumed one when they gave their Christian ethics dogmatic status.

Perhaps John Wesley over identified a mark of God's activity with inner, human "feeling" and visible, natural life. At any rate, in identifying God's working in "this world" with an inner, sensuous signification he was in historical continuity with Catholic mystics, Martin Luther, the Pietists, the English Puritans, and Friedrich Schleiermacher, to a less extent. Perhaps no notable Protestant theologian prior to or contemporaneous with John Wesley

made more than he of the link between evangelical, justifying faith and inner "feeling".

Rudolf Bultmann would fault John Wesley for treating "faith" and the "new creation" "according to the flesh" because he tried to make it an object of empirical observation.¹⁷⁴ Had not John Wesley fallen into mythological speaking by representing the unworldly and divine as the worldly and human? Upon what basis, Rudolf Bultmann might ask, could one draw conclusions about the nature of the transcendent God's work from observed, finite happenings? Even if it be granted that God has worked in a particular manner in a particular context, how and on what grounds, could one generalize this manner of working to other situations?

JUSTIFICATION'S STATE OF EXISTENCE: LOVE

Rudolf Bultmann speaks of love as an ontological possibility of existence and a concomitant of believing, eschatological existence.¹⁷⁵ When the person in faith no longer wills for himself, he loves now because he exists for others. Faith does not result in the addition of anything -- a quality, a supernatural, ontological essence, a power, or an attitude -- to the believer's nature. Whatever human nature's knowledge, ability, or propensity to love prior to faith, so is it after faith. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the acceptance of the proclamation provides the person with the opportunity to will for others rather than to choose himself. The only difference between love in unbelieving and believing existence is one's own decision toward the proclamation. Indeed, he follows classical Protestant thought in so far as he affirms that the acceptance of God's saving act allows one to love. However, he differentiates himself from classical Protestantism by disavowing that faith ushers in an additional essence which is the indwelling God who is love.

Love for him was measured more by its intensity, earnestness and totality of the believer in love than by the kind and content of the love. However, he could declare that for faith, love becomes the "dominant and sustaining force"

of one's life. If "sustaining" means "to maintain" or "keep going", one would wish for more clarity on how to reconcile this love with a faith of the "moment".

In contradistinction to him, John Wesley espoused a more sophisticated concept of love. Love's essence for him has first an ontological relation to the "vertical" and transcendent dimension. Saving faith receives the God of love when God in the reconciling Jesus Christ comes into a man through the Holy Spirit. For, as Martin Schmidt aptly brings out, love for John Wesley has its fons et origo in God. God's love floods the believer's life enabling him to be restored to the loving union with Him for which he was intended.¹⁷⁶

Concomitantly with this holy union, God imbues the believer with Himself and, therefore, with His essence of love which becomes a part of a newly recreated nature. For him love is a quality transferred invisibly by God but really received by the believer.

In contrast to Rudolf Bultmann, love according to John Wesley was not directed just from man to man but in the first place between God and man. The absence of this dimension of love between man and the personal God in Rudolf Bultmann's theology distinguishes his theology from that of classical Catholicism and Protestantism. For John Wesley, love's one intention is "to love God and man".

Moreover, the new quality of love which epitomized the new creation also had a peculiar divine intellectual and moral content. This divine, moral content was expressed by the new Law.¹⁷⁷ According to Rudolf Bultmann, love is not filled with moral or ethical content. With a likeness to Martin Luther melded to an existentialist revolt against established, authoritative norms, he read the new existence as release from external, formal authority. Love did not (it need not) provide the Christian with a new code of right and wrong. Every person knows what he ought to do already from the contextual situation. This is consistent with his conception of a faith which brings no new knowledge with it, religious or otherwise.

Rudolf Bultmann does not explain how it is that everyone knows what is right in any particular situation, nor why it is that everyone knows what is right yet does what is wrong. Further, one is not clear as to whether or not Rudolf Bultmann wants to say that whatever any Christian believer believes is right in a particular circumstance actually is "right".

Does he argue in a circle? How does everyone know what is right except that an everyday, normative, societal understanding of morality is presupposed? Is it not from this "everyday" "talk" that he proposes to deliver the Christian?

"Love" for John Wesley was more than a philosophical, re-direction of the will. It was a supernatural quality, a dispositional attitude and an affection of the soul. True, as for Rudolf Bultmann, it was a matter of intensity and concentrated singleness of involvement. However, love for him was more all-embracing of the total Christian pursuit in that love pursued "the one end of our life in all our words and actions"; that is, to love God and man.¹⁷⁸ The intensity and dominance comprehended more than the earnest will -- love informed and engaged the whole heart and life -- lips, understanding, spirit and strength as well as the outward actions. As a direct effect of saving faith, it was tangibly "felt" within the person as well as manifested in outward actions.

John Wesley's conception of the state of the new creation resulting from saving faith is essentially cheerful, pregnant with expectation, and confidently victorious. The realism of the continuation of and fight against sin after justification is more than counteracted by his assurance of the advancement of holiness. The development of this qualitatively improving life which produces fruits of peace, love, joy will blossom until God may give complete triumph over all sin -- even before death.¹⁷⁹ At the eschaton, unrestricted union and co-habitation will result between God and man forever.

Was John Wesley's hopeful confidence regarding what he believed God could achieve in this life overly zealous and incredible? Interestingly, what

was in typical Catholic and Protestant understanding reserved for the eschaton, John Wesley envisaged as already occurring now. Herein he deviates from classical Protestantism, and also from Catholicism in that the perfection which Catholics envisaged as possible for a select few by process of God-enabled doing, John Wesley foresaw as God's desire for all as a gift of faith.¹⁸⁰

He seems to be uncommonly alone among theologians in theological history in regards to his singular, doctrinal formulation. Because of the peculiarity of this teaching, its questionableness is not to be denied. Furthermore, it in turn encourages a cautious appraisal of his theology.

Christian perfection in part was an expression of the dawning of his radical faith in the living and immanently present supernatural God with whom nothing is impossible. Was he partly pressed into cleaving to the doctrine of Christian perfection in his combat with the Moravians and strict Calvinists? He drew the logical inference that allowing anything less than Christian perfection was a capitulation to the view that sin remained by necessity in believers until glorification. Accepting the strict Calvinist doctrine was to accept that all Christians in all ages do and will commit sin as long as they live. "God forbid we should thus speak," John Wesley exclaimed.¹⁸¹

His defense that one could not be worse, if not better, for expecting God to deliver him from all sin has its merit.¹⁸² Namely, one's vision or expectations are directly related to one's performance. Moreover, it does not close the door on what the-God-with-whom-nothing-is-impossible can do in a believer's life. However, one has to weigh this against any tendency to produce accompanying spiritual hypochondria, to induce excessive burden of needless guilt, and spiritual pride. Furthermore, though his theology of "faith working thru love" might be precariously balanced in reason and theoretical argument, can the balance be maintained in practice without reducing down to "moralism" and "legalism"?

Colin Williams warns that if John Wesley's bifurcation of sin were not kept in view, the definition of sin as a conscious violation of God's law could easily lead to harbouring "unexamined prejudices and inward sins". Moreover, Colln Williams sees danger in the implicit individualism of this definition because it hid holiness' implications for social relations in John Wesley's followers. While the definition is individual-centred, that this feature inhibited Methodists from being socially responsible is debateable. However, if one seeks a definition of sin which also encompasses corporate, socio-political sin, then John Wesley's is insufficient.

The teaching that the justified state leads to an entirely sanctified state seemed to be controversial from the start, not the least among the evangelicals. Moreover, it was a difficult and elusive doctrine to inculcate. In 1772 John Wesley wrote to Charles, "almost all our preachers in every circuit have done with Christian perfection". The preachers' reserve toward Christian perfection shows up in contrast to the reception of justification by faith.¹⁰³ Was it partly because only relatively few had an experience with it?

Moreover, John Wesley's doctrinal exposition of it was inchoate. His description of the tension of sin in the believer is stated with a cogency, a convincing realism and authenticity which overtakes his sketchy, positive formulation of entire sanctification. Furthermore, because of the singularity of his doctrine, he lacked the substantial, corroborating support and augmentation from the body of Puritan and evangelical resources which he had previously drawn upon to fortify other doctrinal presentations.

In arguing for the necessity of Christian perfection, did John Wesley proffer a false alternative? Either the believer seeks Christian perfection and experiences a victorious life over sin, or he does not accept and seek it and rests in his justification, resigning himself to sinning that grace may abound. For one not to accept John Wesley's formulation of entire sanctification does not necessarily mean that one does not affirm holiness or that the justified will pant less after it. One might cite George Whitefield and William

Grimshaw who were cautious about John Wesley's teaching of perfection but led exemplary lives.

Just the same, John Wesley's theology was ever-buoyant and confidently anticipatory of God's re-creating possibilities in the justified person's new life. Was it his avowal of Christian perfection that enabled such a confident outlook in the impossibility-working-God or his experience and understanding of this God which enabled such anticipation of full salvation? What role did an assured, Augustan age play in the rise and prosperity of such a sanguine theology?

To those high or low, regardless of hopeless or humble station or situation, his theology promised victory over sin, the perfidious, enslaving enemy of life. His theology asserted the unshakable conviction that God present through the Holy Spirit could transform the justified person's inner and outer visible life and, consequently, the Church's and the nation's.¹⁶⁴

For Rudolf Bultmann, the new, graced existence is not one without its optimism, albeit one which in contrast to that of John Wesley's had felt the chastening lashes of modern scholarship and global devastation. If the "new creation" in relation to visible chronos-history for John Wesley might be portrayed as the early dawn breaking in upon the old age's darkness and ever brightening to the noon day of the eschaton, the unbelieving existence in relation to world history for Rudolf Bultmann is a perpendicular shaft of light against an unending murky spacecape. It is hope with and against a background of unmitigated uncertainty. In contrast to severe existentialism, he was unwilling to consign man's state to total despair. Authentic existence could give man hope and freedom in his angst.¹⁶⁵ Herein he is striking a chord faithful to Martin Luther and to the historic Christian proclamation.

Nevertheless, authentic existence does not reverse or ameliorate man's factual situation. Therefore, Rudolf Bultmann's optimistic proposal pales next to his pessimistic resignation to this visible world's inexorable, evil reality. Has he succeeded in his desire to overcome the nihilist critique in a telling

and convincingly adequate way? Are his God and believing existence enough to counteract and rise above man's overpowering, debilitating perplexities and offer substantial comfort and help in his struggles and ambiguities?

Having accepted atheistic, existential assumptions, Rudolf Bultmann has prejudged eschatological existence's status as faint and anaemic next to the potency and virility of existentialism's description of existence in this visible world. His interpretation is contrary to the image of God vanquishing and redeeming His creation as affirmed in both the Old and the New Testaments as well as in historic Christian tradition. In his courageous attempt to save Christian faith from its would-be cultural executioners, one could argue he left it more vulnerable and weak than he found it.

One advantage of his interpretation of believing existence is that critics would be hard put to locate any hypocrisy in the believer's new existence. Nonetheless, they might have contempt for its "pie-in-the-sky" thesis which neither expects nor gets resultant, tangible fruits in the tangible world. Seeking to extricate Christian faith from the culture, he in turn leaves Christian faith dangerously free to be tethered to any prevailing cultural ethos that has consensus. In this respect, Christian existence becomes subject to the bane of existentialism, the "everyday".

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING

While John Wesley's theological interest in justification and its practical implication and resulting new life was directed to the common, "everyday" person, Rudolf Bultmann's explication of justification was noematically orientated. As Thomas Aquinas before him sought to rationalize the Christian faith with the then fashionable Aristotelian philosophy, one of Rudolf Bultmann's implicit, fundamental aims (although he would not appear to be happy in this judgment) was to attempt to reconcile the Christian Gospel to modern, atheistic, philosophical critique (Feuerbach) and existential philosophical analysis (particularly Heidegger). Like Friedrich Schleiermacher,

he desired to justify intellectually the Christian faith to the outside, critical intelligentsia and academicians.¹⁸⁶ As John Wesley intentionally wrote for the "plain" person, so Rudolf Bultmann wrote for the scholar.

The fruits of John Wesley's labours are visible and have been assessed for two hundred and fifty years. However, the effect of Rudolf Bultmann's proposal of justification on modern Christianity will be difficult to assess. In attempting to evaluate him, we may ask to what degree his formulation has renewed disillusioned Christian scholars or convinced sceptics to decide for the Christian proclamation. How many more than before, as a direct result of his work, now view Christian faith as intellectually viable and credible? Perhaps even more important, how many have realized and testify to the authentic life to which he has directed us? Whether or not and how his theology might be related to it, one does observe that the traditional Christian denominations in the United States and Great Britain which have been more influenced by his work and that of others like him in the last thirty years have increasingly not flourished during this period.

Rudolf Bultmann ostensibly undertook to bring the New Testament and faith to the bar of modern science and rationality, bringing the former into line with the latter. In mounting his polemic against classical theology and in order to establish his existential theology, he wields and applies two different conceptions of science: "outer", natural science and "inner", historical science (theology's realm). He assumes that every science develops the given pre-understanding it has already as a result of its pre-scientific relation to its particular field of objects.¹⁸⁷ A particular relation to some subject matter has its own particular method (e.g. natural or historical science); namely, its own conceptuality, its way of showing its objects and justifying its statements.¹⁸⁸

The systematic illumination of some subject matter is "scientific" according to Rudolf Bultmann if its particular method or interpretation is "the only appropriate one" to that field.¹⁸⁹ Essentially, he maintains that theology is "scientific" if its object, faith in unity with God's eschatological act, is

disclosed by means of the existential analytical method.

How has he arrived at theology's object upon which a pre-scientific relation is established and his methodology constructed? Have not Rudolf Bultmann's own presuppositions of the nature of God pre-determined the nature of the pre-scientific relation and the kind of "scientific" conceptuality he can find congruent with this object? Further, is it not an exercise in question begging to determine conclusively beforehand what phenomenon is or is not possible for Christian theology (particularly, when the New Testament testimony purports to be of an extraordinary nature) and, thereby, to construct structures accordingly which discover only what one has determined in advance could be discovered? One reason for highlighting this is that Rudolf Bultmann is less than fair in portraying his theology as "science" and others (which would include John Wesley's) as superstition.

Not only does Rudolf Bultmann presuppose certain presumptions of the nature of God, but also en route to establishing theology's object, he assumes a prior "scientific" understanding of reality which further delimits and conditions the conception of theology's field of object. For instance, he assumes that the scientific theologian must explain any testimony or event in terms of factors ordinarily immanent in history. He has accepted this as an axiomatic pre-condition before he surveys the subject matter of theology. What if the theological field of object is reported and asserted to be of an extraordinary nature in which events and phenomena, though historical occurrences, transcend what may ordinarily be accounted for by factors within history?

John Wesley did not consciously approach the New Testament or his search for religious understanding deductively. His was consciously an inductive approach in keeping with the one expressed by Karl Barth. Karl Barth called into question Rudolf Bultmann's method of approaching the text with a prior decision as to the measure and limits of intelligibility and non-intelligibility. Rather, one should be openly looking for and patiently following

the text's self-disclosure.¹⁹⁰

Of course, Rudolf Bultmann's point which he fired back at Karl Barth, and would at John Wesley, was that he could approach the text as little as any others without presuppositions and questions. Though, as we have affirmed, his point is well taken and theology has followed him rather than Karl Barth at this point, it does not follow that his presuppositions are the right ones and Karl Barth's and John Wesley's are the wrong ones. Moreover, we must consider the possibility that some presuppositions more than others directly and substantially distort the text's self-disclosure. As a consequence, we must consider allowing the text's self-disclosure to correct or annul our presuppositions.

John Wesley appreciated the fact not dissimilar in logic from Rudolf Bultmann's thesis that the methodology needed to apprehend a particular reality must vary according to that reality. Specifically, natural phenomena are perceived by employing the physical senses; supernatural phenomena must be apprehended by the super-sensuous spiritual senses. If Rudolf Bultmann's definition of "scientific" theology is that conception which is appropriate to its object of study, then one can argue that John Wesley's is at least as "scientific" as his. A point he would not concede.

Moreover, one could at least raise the question whether or not and how inexorable loyalty to a "scientific" assumption, for example, the thesis of "immanence", can be justified in the wake of anomalous data which challenge its inner, logical integrity and throw it into dispute? At what point does one's resolute adherence to a natural, finite, "scientific" assumption, regardless of conflicting data, become idolatrous dogmatism and exalt a finite assumption to an "eternal" standard? The two theologians would go roundabout in accusing each other of elevating to an absolute what each considered to be a human word.

Rudolf Bultmann's "scientific" pre-conceptuality assumes a rigorous empiricism by which he judges classical, theological rationalizations as

inappropriate.¹⁹¹ However, he facilely and unfairly exempts the existential, theological analysis -- particularly in regards to salvation event -- from empirical judgment on the grounds that it is of a different conceptuality than the natural sciences which are subject to scientific empiricism. He assumes a false alternative: either (a) one speaks illegitimately of God and the things of God in propositional form because one abortively assigns to Him a truth of universal validity which one claims is verifiable by empirical science, or (b) one speaks validly of God from one's own concrete existence.

John Wesley did accept that Scriptural affirmations were propositions pointing to a reality which did not necessarily legitimately lend itself to the same procedure of verification as natural phenomena. To declare that one cannot speak in theological propositional truths because they are such that they cannot be shown to be empirically true not only straps a false demand on theology, but also may be seen to judge it by a conceptuality alien to it.

In principle, John Wesley did not accept a truth of the invisible world with the same confidence with which he accepted a truth of the empirical world because the invisible truth could be tested by natural sensation. Rather, he accepted the truth of the invisible world because it was known and confirmed by faith and the spiritual senses. For him, one did not have to demand scientific, empirical proof in order to have confidence in rational, theological affirmations because theological faith conveyed its own convincing evidence. However, Rudolf Bultmann on the basis of this description would question whether these two realms could be given equal credibility and weight or inspire equal confidence.

Rudolf Bultmann argues that a rational, theological proposition that claims to speak of God in a "general truth" and, therefore, purports to be a would-be scientific proposition, must by necessity fail to be authoritative. However, at the same time he proposes that a rational, theological statement conceived in a philosophical context (the salvation proclamation, the lynchpin of his theological enterprise) which cannot be supported by any reason, experience,

historical or scientific proof is of such authority that it demands the individual's unquestioning obedience. Yet this is deemed by him the "scientific" theology.

Notwithstanding this, though John Wesley and Rudolf Bultmann conceive of theology differently, they both still accept that theology applies to a realm with a distinct conceptuality from the natural, visible realm. In both cases, faith is still the means by which man transcends this visible, natural world. Viewed from the outside, the visible world of both their respective centuries, their proposals of Christian faith were to some extent assaults on reason.¹⁰²

Nonetheless, Rudolf Bultmann argues that the existential approach to theology is the unique formulation for the existence of modern man who can no longer take Scripture literally -- that is, accept its propositions as objectifications of the divine (Göttliche) -- and who has developed a sophisticated scientific mindset. Curiously, however, according to Rudolf Bultmann, the apostle Paul in the first century, as man supposedly in the twentieth, rejected literalism. He prepared the way for the New Testament's criticism of its mythological assertions by understanding his theology eschatologically and existentially (in the vein of Rudolf Bultmann's proposal).¹⁰³ Immediately after Paul's day the Gospel was misconstrued according to Greek ontology and interpreted in a literalistic, mythological fashion. This misconstruction correlated with civilization's primitive and scientifically undeveloped level of human thought; yet, Rudolf Bultmann maintains man's coming of age in modern times warrants Paul's existential programme.

This scheme raises several questions: if the eschatological, existential understanding was suitable to Paul and Christians in the first century, why was Paul such a failure at transmitting it? If Paul was such a failure, why do his letters form the basis of the New Testament and why does he appear as the spearhead of the Christian mission? Moreover, why was Paul's eschatological understanding not appropriated in the intervening centuries by human thought more common to it than that of the disparate twentieth

century?

An implicit assumption of Rudolf Bultmann's that the development, evolution, or maturity of human civilization and thought necessarily necessitated a corresponding "literalist" or "existential" view is not demonstrated. Why out of twenty centuries were such dissimilar centuries as the first and twentieth receptive to the eschatological, existential theological understanding while the other centuries were not? If the New Testament was interpreted existentially, why does not at least a residue of this interpretation appear and persist in consequent Christian theology?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, much theological water has flowed under the proverbial bridge since John Wesley. Modern commentators are wont to emphasize the discontinuity between then and now. Indeed, because of his theocentric commitment, John Wesley could be described as a mediaeval man similar to Martin Luther. He affirmed that the gracious, personal trinitarian God is the gravitational centre in which all things have their being and cohere. He is the unifying principle under which all is subsumed and the axis around which all of human thought and existence revolve. Man is measured by Him and not He by man.

Contrariwise, Rudolf Bultmann could be described as a modern man in the sense that he was a child of the Aufklärung. This concurs with Karl Barth's assessment that he is to be viewed in the context of the Enlightenment.¹⁹⁴ Amassing steam in John Wesley's day, the Enlightenment sought to restore man to his true value and importance by locating the key to and conquest of genuine, human knowledge, understanding, and existence full of meaning in man himself. Specifically, Rudolf Bultmann's commitment is summarized in his statement that theology is anthropology; namely, in order for man to know God he must first understand himself and his existence.¹⁹⁵

Despite that, John Wesley is by no means devoid of the elevation of man and Rudolf Bultmann does not ignore the exaltation of God and His saving event Jesus Christ.

Though John Wesley on the whole eschewed fine, theological distinctions, the distinctions he made show an immediate kinship with a Puritan and Reformed scholasticism which, influenced by Middle Age scholasticism, were given a Protestant twist. However, as Rudolf Bultmann's theology demonstrates, if the use of metaphysical subtlety was a characteristic of a mediaeval man, Rudolf Bultmann could still qualify. If an empirical spirit was a mark of a modern man, John Wesley was not lacking it.

Be that as it may, even if Rudolf Bultmann may be described as "modern" and John Wesley as "mediaeval", one is by no means compelled to view Rudolf Bultmann's formulation of justification by faith as an irreversible and qualitative advance (as in the field of physical scientific theory) which better and more accurately accounts for the data than the "mediaeval". While John Wesley's understanding will not be accepted merely because it has claims to historic, Christian and Protestant tradition, neither should it be rejected out of hand because of that.

In general, John Wesley did not concern himself with the intellectual perplexities of faith per se. He seems to have considered the intellectual quarrels of the "men of learning" with saving faith and genuine Christianity to be more appropriately a mark of spiritual blindness of heart rather than of intellectual difficulty.

On the other hand, Rudolf Bultmann's formulation addressed itself to the Christian faith's need to be viable without forcing modern, thinking persons to the sacrificium intellectus. His motive is to be commended and seen as a genuine attempt to respond to formidable modern challenges.

Form and historical criticism and existential interpretation were sophisticated methods which allowed him to dismiss many stumbling blocks - including most of the classical characterization of the historical Jesus. One is not far wrong in saying that in making belief "reasonable", he left no reason for belief. Ironically, in his re-interpretation, he not only rids Christian faith of some of its stumbling blocks, but also of its raison d'être, Jesus Christ. Consequently, he paradoxically left a huge intellectual stumbling block -- which to me seems just as large as John Wesley's -- at the critical crunch point of his theology: that a community's human impression which it does not accept as referring to factual truth regarding a man Jesus of ambiguous significance be accepted as the authoritative Word of God which demands one's total renunciation and obedience.

While the traditional theology that accepts New Testament "mythologies" literally is deemed credulous and obsolete, Rudolf Bultmann exalts his irrationality to the acceptable and the sacred. He supplants one "irrationality" with another "irrationality". Nonetheless, he suggests the use of the terms "irrational" and "numinous" are a necessary protest against theological "rationalism" and "moralism".¹⁹⁶

His proposal gives the impression of being a sort of caricature of the traditional Christian proclamation. Though it safeguards his claim, he fences off the Gospel proclamation from intellectual incursion by stating that one may not even ask "why" regarding it. This is perplexing coming from an academic who in every other context vigorously promotes the asking of "why". However, it is not unlike the attitude of John Wesley who, though he did not banish reasoning from investigating, accepts that there is a point beyond which reasoning endangers itself.

Neither theologian wanted genuine faith to rest ultimately upon reason or external evidence. Religious authenticity which no one could destroy lies in the individual subject man; namely, in the individual's concrete existence (Bultmann) and in the individual's inner experience (Wesley).

Both theologians believed that their theological expositions of faith were uncovering or re-covering for their own generations the faith of the primitive New Testament church.¹⁹⁷ John Wesley's theology of justification by faith is historically continuous with the English Puritans, the Church of England Homilies and Articles, the German Moravians and the sixteenth century Reformers. Though Rudolf Bultmann's theology of justification is in form similar to Martin Luther's, drawing from such other influences as Wilhelm Herrmann and, of course, Martin Heidegger, he forged a unique theological content essentially distinct from classical Protestantism and, for the that matter, classical Christianity.¹⁹⁸

Is Rudolf Bultmann a defender of Christian faith? He is, if one does not interpret this as meaning he seeks to protect or preserve some historical,

orthodox theological content which over the ages has endured as a description of Christian faith. Nonetheless, he could think of himself as a preserver of Christian faith from the standpoint that he was uncovering and once again faithfully disclosing the kerygma hidden since the apostle Paul. However, from a classical Catholic-Protestant perspective, he betrays and overturns genuine Christian faith.¹⁹⁹ He insisted that theology had no alternative but to accept the demise of the traditional Christian conception.²⁰⁰

Likewise, John Wesley's vision of restoring genuine, primitive faith to Christianity brought its own threat to established theological understanding.²⁰¹ In setting forth his description of Christian faith recovered, his account like Rudolf Bultmann's called into question the common, established opinions which were the meat of the "vulgar" and the "everyday talk" of the "they" which had concealed the truth rather than revealed it. From the dominant eighteenth century theological perspectives, John Wesley's theology of justification by faith was also viewed as a danger and detriment to historic Christian faith.²⁰²

Blaise Pascal commented that the great battle of Christianity through all the ages is "being fought by two invisible armies, as they struggle to dominate the minds of men. The one army we might rightly call Supernaturalism; the other, with equal accuracy, we shall designate Naturalism." This dichotomy, though it needs qualification in the light of Rudolf Bultmann's theology which in some sense defies these alternatives, is still instructive in providing an index for the essential, contrasting tendency of an essential distinction between these two theologies of justification by faith.

Rudolf Bultmann, just as John Wesley, affirms the reality of God who is a power beyond man. However, studiously avoiding referring to God or God's realm as "supernatural", he prefers the term "transcendent". The term "supernatural", being for all intents and purposes for him equated with the term "mythological", conjures up the image of the classically conceived New Testament God with all the attending metaphysical descriptions and signs,

wonders, and miracles attributed to Him. In other words, it was essentially the God John Wesley asserted was powerfully present and working in the experiences of those of the eighteenth century evangelical reformation.

Integral to Rudolf Bultmann's theology is a God who is beyond man and "this world" but who does not fit the description of the New Testament God classically, literally conceived. Does Rudolf Bultmann conceive this God to be a power not only beyond man and this natural world but also beyond and outside the whole cosmos? Or is God a power beyond man and this natural world yet one who is within the universe?

The latter sense seems appropriate because he, reminiscent of the eighteenth century "supernatural" rationalists, wants to acknowledge an "infinite" and a "Beyond" that he in his working assumptions can presume is, nevertheless, congruent with a closed universe and rational, empirical suppositions. It would seem Rudolf Bultmann's insistence on the importance of the believer's encounter with the irrational, mysterious Word is incongruous with its relatively factual unimportance juxtaposed to the real importance of the rational and empirical.²⁰³

While Enlightenment ideas have become democratized in the twentieth century, commentators may exaggerate the problem of the Christian faith and the "supernatural"/mythological as a uniquely twentieth century problem. Although Rudolf Bultmann's particular conception was unknown to John Wesley, John Wesley was not unfamiliar with a scepticism about the supernatural and a conception of God similar to Rudolf Bultmann's. He spoke of those who affirmed a God and also accepted that there was nothing but matter.²⁰⁴

Though Rudolf Bultmann would challenge John Wesley's comment that the one who believed in this God did not believe the Bible, nonetheless, a crucial issue playing its way in counterpoint through the comparison of their two theologies of justification is this: can the portrait of the supernatural God which the plain, natural sense of the New Testament describes be believed to

set forth the authentic God, or can an outside, imported philosophical and/or anthropological conceptualization of God in the light of which the New Testament description of God is to be read be believed as setting forth the authentic God?

John Wesley, who believed in the former in his expression of justification by faith, did not have to wait for the nineteenth and twentieth century and a Rudolf Bultmann to style him "deluded" and a "madman" who believed a "cunningly-devised fable".²⁰⁵ Some of his own contemporary observers were quite willing to do that.

By Rudolf Bultmann's prime, almost two centuries had transpired since John Wesley's day, and the most current thinking from the various scientific disciplines, including historical criticism, history of religion studies, and "scientific" philosophy has been brought to bear upon Rudolf Bultmann's description of justification. Nonetheless, he is no less sheltered from the query as to whether or not his understanding of justification by faith may also be a trick of the devil to make Christianity look ridiculous.

1. Wesley, vol. 4, p. 140; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, vol. 1, p. 232; Bultmann, Primitive Christianity, pp. 48f.
2. See above, pp. 3f, 33b; Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 179; Karl Barth notes that Bultmann in his returning to the Reformation and its theology demonstrates one of the important tendencies of theological development in the decades prior to the 1950's.

Moreover, he states that one of the two factors which govern all human existence, according to Bultmann's understanding of the New Testament kerygma, is the "new determination" which occurs when faith knows the saving act of God.

In fact, he argues, soteriology is such an all-dominant concern in Bultmann that it absorbs christology into it. Hans-Werner Bartsch, ed., Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate, trans. Reginald H. Fuller, vol. 2 (London: SPCK, 1962), pp. 88f, 96f.

3. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 302; Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 270f; Colin Williams also asserts that it is the "real basis and beginning of the Christian life". Colin W. Williams, John Wesley's Theology Today (Nashville, New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 71. Martin Schmidt states that in regards to the doctrine of justification, the whole of theology was at stake for John Wesley. Martin Schmidt, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, 2 vols. (Nashville, New York: Abingdon Press, 1972-73) Vol. 2: John Wesley's Life Mission, part 2, trans. Denis Inman, p. 78.
4. See above, p. 3 Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, pp. 270f.
5. See above, p. 3; Martin Schmidt also notes John Wesley's affirmations of the two fundamental doctrines of the Methodist movement as justification and perfection; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 156. This can be widened to include other major themes; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 172. According to Martin Schmidt, John Wesley's immediate eulogists highlighted his vital concerns as justification, regeneration, and perfection; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 200, 210.
6. See above, pp. 3f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 39; vol. 7, p. 216. Colin Williams quotes Gordon Rupp as saying that "from beginning to end John Wesley believed and preached justification by faith only Nevertheless, as he put it, that holiness was his point." Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 176; Martin Schmidt observes John Wesley's exaltation of love above faith; Martin Schmidt, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, 2 vols. (Nashville, New York: Abingdon Press, 1972-1973) Vol. 2: John Wesley's Life Mission, part 1, trans. Norman P. Goldhawk, p. 207; vol. 2, part 2, p. 55.

One must be careful to avoid thinking that because love could be stated to be more glorious than faith, faith was less vital and integral to salvation for John Wesley. One must try to keep in mind when and to whom and in what context John Wesley penned certain remarks. In the early stages of his evangelical theological career, he could write in 1746 to The Rev. Mr. Church, who censured the preaching of justification by faith for undermining good works, that whereas faith was the "door" of religion, holiness was "religion itself"; Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 8, p. 472.

However, in 1784 he answered his rhetorical question about what

religion is to his Roman Catholic nephew Charles by saying that religion is "faith working by love"; Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 216.

By and large, faith and love were inextricable co-essentials of the religion and Gospel he preached so that usually when he stressed the one he stressed the other. As he advised in 1774, "But let your eye be single. Aim still at one thing-- holy, loving faith, giving God the whole heart." Wesley, Letters, vol. 6, p. 113.

John Wesley seems to overstate his case in his comparison of faith and love in the 1750 sermon "The Law Established Through Faith: Discourse 2" wherein he sets forth the greater excellency of love over faith and states that faith is the "grand means of restoring that holy love", "the sole end, of every dispensation of God", Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 38-40. This fear of Antinomianism is probably responsible for the overstatement. See, Albert Outler's comments, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 2f.

Nonetheless, his essential proposal that faith's end is to "restore man to the love from which he was fallen" and that love is the highest of all graces is mentioned elsewhere (e.g., in 1777 before the Humane Society; see, Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 405.

7. "World-history" is Bultmann's term; Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 36.
8. Colin Williams says John Wesley affirms that salvation is the "total work of God" and that we can be in "real though not total possession of it now"; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 41.
9. See above, p. 14 ; Though Martin Schmidt quotes John Wesley's statement that "grace is the source" and Colin Williams notes that it is grace which restores us to God's favour (this being the death of Christ), neither discuss explicitly John Wesley's careful delineation of "cause" and "condition"; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 12, 203; Williams, John Wesley's Theology, p. 74.
10. Colin Williams' assessment confirms this when he states that John Wesley's central interest in the doctrine of Christ is in what Christ has done and can do for us; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 89.
11. Schubert Ogden states that Bultmann conceded that the New Testament's objective statements indicate that it understood the cross as a mythical event. Bultmann held that the christological ascriptions are best interpreted not in terms of their objective contents but as statements of existential significance. Schubert M. Ogden, Christ Without Myth: A Study Based on the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann, (Dallas: SMU Press, 1979) p.78.

Colin Williams comments that John Wesley normally just assumes the orthodox formulations of the person of Christ.

12. In reference to what has been already stated, Colin Williams observes that when John Wesley treats Christ's work as the Mediator he discusses Christ's deity and twofold nature as God and man. Accepting the orthodox Christological formulations, he asserted the vital necessity of the deity of Jesus; Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 85,90ff. Both Colin Williams and Martin Schmidt notice his defense of the deity of Jesus against the

Socinians and Deists; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 110; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 91, footnote 48.

Martin Schmidt includes a fascinating account of an attack against John Wesley which ran in the London Magazine in 1760. The critic advised John Wesley that one must sharply distinguish between the words of Jesus himself and their record by his disciples in formulating theology for the present day; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 165f.

13. See discussion above, Section Two, Chapter Two, "Two Faiths": Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, vol. 2, pp. 95-97. Discussion of Rudolf Bultmann's theology has centered none the least around his understanding of Jesus of Nazareth and His relation to the salvation-occurrence. As was stated, Karl Barth asked whether Rudolf Bultmann wished to stress the salvation-occurrence as "The Christ Event" or "The Christ Event". In other words, asks Schubert Ogden, must one become convinced of Christ's significance before he can discern the meaning of the cross? Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 80f.

Karl Barth states that Rudolf Bultmann does wish to a considerable extent to stress that the saving act of God is an historical event -- it is linked with the name of Jesus of Nazareth and His life and death. However, to ascribe the historicity of the Christ-occurrence simply to the fact that it began in the life and death of the man Jesus and derives its name and title from Him -- but is actually located not in Him -- is insufficient according to Karl Barth. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, vol. 2, pp. 95f.

For Karl Barth, that which causes the transition from the "old" determination to the new determination must be located in the life and death of the man Jesus of Nazareth. It is in him that we find "the content, the substance, the backbone ... in a word, the principle of the Christian message". Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 96. He does not believe it is congenial with the New Testament to see Jesus Christ's importance only as he enters into the kerygma and finds obedience among its hearers. Christology and the doctrine of Christ must have independent significance in and of itself and not simply be dethroned and merged into soteriology. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 96f.

For instance, Karl Barth argues that the cross and resurrection -- the total Christ event -- would seem to have objective, intrinsic significance of its own and not only as it has significance "for us" which is derived by from soteriology us in the here and now. Christology is the prior and determining factor rather than the reverse as Rudolf Bultmann has it. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p.110.

Schubert Ogden asserts that Rudolf Bultmann has been widely misunderstood to deny "all real continuity" between the Jesus of history and the crucified Christ of the kerygma. He is right in defending Rudolf Bultmann's affirmation of the necessary place of the historical Jesus and His historical cross for existentiell faith. Jesus's death on the cross raised the question of decision for the apostles, namely, that Jesus was the messenger bringing God's final, decisive word. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 81f.

However, Schubert Ogden concedes that Rudolf Bultmann fails to express adequately "the 'objective' reality of the revelatory event

Jesus the Christ" as critics such as Karl Barth maintained. He disagrees with critics such as Karl Barth that the lesson to be learned is that we need some other and more "objective" christology but rather that we must improve upon Rudolf Bultmann's. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp.158f.

14. Schubert Ogden acknowledges that Rudolf Bultmann affirms that if we simply follow the New Testament's objective statements, the cross is undoubtedly understood as a mythical event. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p.78.
15. As a radical, traditio-historical critic who was at the forefront of those using the Formgeschichte method, Rudolf Bultmann has engaged in innovative and formidable research. He has made elaborate and painstaking attempts to determine what aspects of the Gospel accounts might be the oldest historical traditions. He claimed to bifurcate those which consisted of Jesus' words from the later tradition consisting of apostolic accretions. He tried to ferret out which of the oldest traditions were actually original and which were later developments by comparing the forms of biblical pericopes with the certain, recognized fixed forms of literature. However, Rudolf Bultmann admits it is an investigation fraught with difficulty which is carried on with great caution. In employing a research methodology, one must reckon with the possibility that, given its own presuppositions and subjective assumptions, the researcher before he has begun has already been predisposed to certain conclusions.

On the assumptions that the words of Jesus are many times not his own but theological interpretations, and the outlines of Jesus' life are but editorial creations, one is little surprised that Rudolf Bultmann concludes that we are not able to know the course of Jesus' life: His inner development, His "human personality" (still less any divine character), the origin of the content of his and his followers' preaching, much less the question of his "messianic consciousness". In one sense, Rudolf Bultmann can claim that the science of historical criticism cannot make final, determinative decisions about Jesus; yet, he, in effect, makes a definitive profession by rejecting that the testimony to Jesus may be literally true.

One might at least entertain the possibility that the historical person Jesus could not be integral to the salvation-occurrence for Rudolf Bultmann because he could not in his mind or research solve the problem of Jesus. Hence, he could proceed only by discounting His relevancy. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 41, 48, 52, 54.

16. See above, p. 272; Karl Barth finds Rudolf Bultmann inconsistent because he believes his interpretation is unfaithful in regards to the place he accords Jesus' death. See footnote #13 above for a more complete statement.

Fritz Buri also believes that Rudolf Bultmann's stress on God's saving act in Jesus of Nazareth is inconsistent because it is at odds with his "demythologizing interpretation". He wonders if he has not set a limit to what he previously presented as an unlimited demand for demythologization and existential interpretation. For when Rudolf Bultmann appeals against the claims of philosophy to the unique event of Jesus Christ as the specific possibility for

human existence, he is "falling back into mythology" which he is trying to overcome. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 106f.

Schubert Ogden has a similar concern. He argues that Rudolf Bultmann cannot maintain at once an emphasis on unlimited demythologization and also on salvation as present only to faith in God's saving act in Jesus of Nazareth. For if the Christian faith is demythologized and interpreted existentially as man's original possibility of authentic self-understanding, then it must be independent of any particular historical occurrence.

If the second proposition above is true, and Christian faith is necessarily linked with a particular historical event, then it cannot be man's original possibility of authentic historicity. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 117. Schubert Ogden's suggested improvement on Rudolf Bultmann's proposal is to affirm that the event of Jesus is but the representation in the form of a single human life of man's original possibility of existence which God has always made available to man.

Rudolf Bultmann's inconsistency aside, his emphasis on the centrality and indispensability of the death of Jesus, contrary to Schubert Ogden's suggested amendment which circumvents this necessary emphasis, is faithful both to the stress of the New Testament and to the Reformation.

17. Note Karl Barth's statement on Rudolf Bultmann's return to Martin Luther and the Reformation. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 90f.
18. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 105.
19. It is interesting to speculate whether Søren Kierkegaard's trenchant comment may be relevant to Rudolf Bultmann's problem with Jesus. He observed that if we read in the New Testament that God wills that every man should have \$100,000.00, we could easily enough understand the statement. Likewise, the New Testament was not at all more difficult to understand than this proposition. Rather, the difficulty is in that it does not please us. Rather than dare say "I do not wish it" -- at least to say it in this way -- the "professor(s)" defends himself by having recourse to the pretence that God's will is so difficult to understand, he studies and researches and so on. In other words, muses Søren Kierkegaard, he defends himself by hiding behind folios. Søren Kierkegaard, The Last Years Journals 1853 - 1855, ed. and trans. Ronald Gregor Smith, (London: Collins, The Fontana Library, 1968), pp. 334f.
20. See Section Two, Chapter Two, "Two Faiths"; Karl Barth expressed these views in a letter to Bishop Theophil Wurm on 29 May 1947. Bernd Jaspert, ed., Karl Barth - Rudolf Bultmann Letters 1922 - 1966, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Edinburgh: T.& T.Clark, 1982) pp. 142f.
21. Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jesus -- God and Man, trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe, (London: SCM Press, 1968), p. 24.

Schubert Ogden, while affirming the role of the "objective" reality of the "event Jesus the Christ", does not so much see Rudolf Bultmann's christology ushering in the dissolution of Christianity. Rather, he has provided a foundation upon which theologians such as Schubert Ogden can build. Therefore, he goes beyond Rudolf Bultmann and asserts that it is necessary to affirm that authentic

existence "can be realized apart from faith in Jesus Christ or in the Christian proclamation". Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 144.

22. I am somewhat puzzled by Colin Williams' assessment of John Wesley's teaching of the atonement and the "Moral Influence Theory". On the one hand, he rightly affirms that for John Wesley the Pattern of Christ as the way we must imitate can be a possibility only for those who are justified by faith in the objective event of God's provision of his Son as the atoning sacrifice.

On the other hand, he says that the "Moral Influence Theory is then drawn firmly into Wesley's picture of the Christian life." According to my general understanding, this theory locates our justification in the "loftiest love" kindled in our heart as a result of God's display of love in the passion of Christ on the Cross. See, L. W. Grensted, Doctrine of The Atonement, p.104.

As an evangelical, John Wesley did not use this theory to explain the atonement. Indeed, he did speak of following Christ as Pattern after justification. However, when speaking this way, he was not seeking to explain the atonement by using the "moral influence theory". See, Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 79, 83; see above discussion "The Ground of Justification", pp. 10ff.

Colin Williams did not apparently observe the use of the "satisfaction" theory in John Wesley.

On a different note, he sees a weakness of John Wesley's over individualistic doctrine of the atonement in his underemphasis on the "Christus victor" image. Interestingly, this is the image which Rudolf Bultmann employs and which Colin Williams views as being able to bring us to a deeper awareness of the evil forces that grip corporate life; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 89.

23. Schubert Ogden echoes this point and rightly states that Rudolf Bultmann held that Paul turned to these foreign concepts because they enabled him to express more adequately than the Jewish cultic and juristic thinking the meaning of the crucifixion. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 78. Paul wanted to convey that Christ's death overcame the power as well as the guilt of sin.

However, one may question that the "dying and rising" motif is borrowed from Gnosticism and that Hebrew thinking was inadequate to express God's victory over sin. Karl Barth comments that Rudolf Bultmann's doctrine of the cross "looks suspiciously like Catholic passion mysticism". Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, vol. 2, pp. 99.

At any rate, both Rudolf Bultmann and John Wesley emphasize that the Cross meant freedom from both the guilt and the power of sin.

24. He wrote to Karl Barth that it is not possible to establish first that Christ's crucifixion is the saving event and then to believe, but that the crucifixion could be seen as the saving event only in faith. Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 94.

Karl Barth judges that the New Testament speaks of the cross as something which is wholly and entirely outside of the believer, something without him and in spite of him. Rudolf Bultmann assure us, as Schubert Ogden points out, that if we view it in this

way we are viewing the cross mythically. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, vol. 2, p. 99; Ogden, Christ without Myth, p. 79.

Rudolf Bultmann's interpretation seems to diminish the aspect of God's sheer, unmerited gracious initiative acting before any activity of man.

25. In both Old and New Testaments, righteousness is linked with God the Judge. Psalms 7:11 states, "God is a righteous judge...."; Psalms 9:8 says "he judges the world with righteousness"; Romans 2:2 and 3:6 and its context in chapter three speak of God as Judge. However, Rudolf Bultmann would see these as applying only to God's eschatological verdict. See ensuing discussion in text. See also, Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. "dikaiosisune" by Gottlob Schrenk, pp. 176f; 196; 204f.
26. While Martin Schmidt leaves John Wesley holding one justification (a conclusion based only on occasional early statements in John Wesley). Colin Williams properly acknowledges John Wesley's adherence to a twofold justification; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 43; vol. 2, part 2, p. 76; Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 67f.
27. Colin Williams corroborates this when he states that for John Wesley justification was an "objective" work in that it did not arise from a change in us but from God's word to us -- "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee"; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 71.
28. See above discussion under sub-heading "The Meaning of Justification to the Individual", p. 25; Colin Williams as well as Martin Schmidt also note that justification for John Wesley is "forgiveness". Colin Williams likewise appreciates the caution with which he uses the word "imputation". Though he could speak of our sins not being imputed against us, he did not speak of "imputed righteousness" (in the historic Protestant sense); Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 70f; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 109.
29. See, Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 235.
30. Gregory Dix, in his essay "The First Four Centuries: Hellenism, Judaism, and Christianity", makes the point that the Jewish instinct asserts a God who reveals Himself in the moral life. See, Edward Gordon Selwyn, ed., A Short History of Christian Thought: A Volume of Essays (London: Geoffrey Bless, 1949), pp. 19, 38.
31. Karl Barth notes that Rudolf Bultmann says that the New Testament addresses man as a sinner and shows him that he is powerless to pull himself from this fallen state. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 92f.

Martin Schmidt in setting forth one of John Wesley's sermons allows us to hear John Wesley say that it is precisely sinners who are addressed by the Gospel. Further, he shows that John Wesley repudiated the imagination that one could be justified by virtue of one's own achievements, by works of the Law. See above discussion, "Who Are Justified? The 'Ungodly'", p. 62; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 17, 152.

32. That for John Wesley the Law's first and real purpose is to convict man of his sin is acknowledged by Martin Schmidt; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 54. Furthermore, as Colin Williams brings out, God seeks to bring man under the judgment of the law so that he may become aware of his fallen condition. God's means for awakening the sinner is usually through the preaching of the law; Williams, John Wesley's Theology, p. 58; See above discussion, "Who are Justified? The Guilty 'Ungodly'", p. 68.
33. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 13.
34. See above, p. 237; Schubert Ogden notes the "extraordinarily high regard" Bultmann has for Heidegger's scientific accomplishment in his analysis of human existence in Sein und Zeit. He agrees with John Macquarrie that the ontology of human existence that Bultmann presupposes in almost all his theological work is the one developed by the early Heidegger. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 45f.

Karl Barth comments that Rudolf Bultmann appropriates Martin Heidegger's philosophy of existentialism which provides him with a certain prior understanding with which to approach the New Testament texts. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 113f.
35. John MacQuarrie, Martin Heidegger, p. 28; Howe O. Thomas, Jr., "Critique of Sin" (University of Bristol, 1984) pp. 9af; John MacQuarrie, An Existentialist Theology: A Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann, The Library of Philosophy and Theology (London: SCM Press, 1955), p. 70.
36. Thomas, "Critique of Sin", p. 9; Macquarrie, Existential Theology, p. 104.
37. Macquarrie, Existential Theology, p. 103. Schubert Ogden points out a distinction here which Rudolf Bultmann made between existential philosophy and existential theology. Though philosophy recognizes that man does not always in fact realize his authentic existence, it assumes this existence is at all times capable of realization. According to Rudolf Bultmann, the New Testament asserts that man has lost the factual possibility. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 73.
38. Martin Heidegger speaks of man "fleeing" and turning toward the entities within-the-world and getting absorbed in them. See, Roger Waterhouse, A Heidegger Critique: A Critical Examination of the Existential Phenomenology of Martin Heidegger, Harvester Philosophy Now, Roy Edgley, gen. ed., 15 vols. (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1981), p. 90.

Moreover, this also incorporates Heidegger's idea of the individual man understanding himself according to the everyday publicness of the "they"; that is, allowing his understanding to be dictated by the averageness of "the many", the crowd, the public mass.
39. Rudolf Bultmann, Essays, p. 12.
40. Ibid, pp. 12f.
41. Ibid, p. 13.

42. Ibid.
43. See above discussion, under: "Who are Justified? The Guilty 'Ungodly'" As Martin Schmidt says, guilt is the primary, the most important, factor in sin for John Wesley. Guilt is sin's indictment against us which consequently sets up our need for acquittal which is attainable only in the Cross; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 14.
44. Rudolf Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 256.
45. In his 1931 essay "The Crisis in Belief", in the context of the sinner's qualification prior to Christian faith, he brings in guilt. See also his 1936 essay on "The Meaning of the Christian Faith in Creation". Ibid, p. 220.
46. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 219f.
47. When Rudolf Bultmann seeks to explain how a sinner is guilty, he typically draws an analogy to the relationship of the individual man to his fellow man. Ibid, pp. 219f; Bultmann, Essays, p. 13. Is this appropriate? Is this relationship of one individual to another individual homologous to the relationship of the individual to the transcendent God, the Thou? In what way is it appropriate to speak the same of one becoming guilty in relation to a non-person, an unknowable God, as becoming guilty in relation to a person? See above discussion, p. 206.
48. In passing, one notes the similarity between this question of man's guilt before the Thou's demand and the concern of why the individual encounters the saving proclamation as the authoritative demand.
49. Martin Schmidt remarks that John Wesley agreed with "John Smith" that faith is rational assent. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 201f; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 46.
50. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief, Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 483; Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 56.
51. Schubert Ogden also points this out by quoting Rudolf Bultmann's statement that "the propositions of faith are not general truths". Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 66.
52. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 349. While Martin Schmidt does not seek to analyze thoroughly John Wesley's understanding, he sees well his general acceptable pattern. He states that for him full faith "is knowledge, perception and acknowledgement all in one, because it takes account of facts, submits to them, grasps them in their internal and mutual consistency, and translates them into its own life." Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 13.
53. John Wesley had absorbed some of the Latitudinarian temper. Karl Barth attributes Rudolf Bultmann's "constant simplification of the Christian message" to the influence of his mentor Wilhelm Herrmann. See, Thomas, Wesley's Understanding of Theological Essentials and Opinions, p. 38; Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 123.

54. Martin Schmidt points to John Wesley's correspondence with Bishop Warburton and his assertion that right opinions were a slender part of religion since God did not begin His work (usually, I would add) in the understanding but in the heart. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, pp. 346-49; Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 224.
55. See John Wesley's plea for making allowance for others who differ according to intellectual or educational background. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief, Frank Baker, vol. 1, pp. 444f.
56. Schubert Ogden also mentions that for Rudolf Bultmann any alternative outside his conception reduces faith to mere intellectual assent. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 122.
57. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 349.
58. John Wesley said to Dr. Warburton that "God generally speaking begins His work at the heart". Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 348.
59. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 348.
60. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, pp. 231ff. He believed heathens, who though they lack Scriptural light, could be taught the "essentials of true religion" by the inner voice of God. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, pp. 494f.
61. Althaus, Martin Luther, pp. 55f, 67. Rudolf Bultmann goes beyond Martin Luther in allowing ostensibly that reason knows no general propositions of God.
62. To my mind, this is not inconsonant with Jesus' call to love God with "all your heart, soul, mind, and strength".
63. This problem is related to the substantial inconsistency that Schubert Ogden finds in Rudolf Bultmann's theology. Specifically, his argument asserts that if Christian faith interpreted solely existentially is man's original possibility of authentic self-understanding, then it must not be tied to any particular historical occurrence. If it is tied to a particular historical occurrence, then it may not be interpreted entirely as man's original possibility of authentic historicity. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 117.
64. If man in the moment of faith cannot use rational discrimination, certainly he has used it at some point in time prior to faith in reasoning through and accepting the philosophical pre-understanding which authentic faith assumes. Faith could not arise if it were not for the substantial groundwork of a "scientific" rational analysis.
65. In accord with the above, does not Rudolf Bultmann also accept two "resolves" as necessary to faith? One's existentiell self-understanding which comes as a result of one's resolve to accept one's existence as Being-toward-death (according to Martin Heidegger's discussion) precedes a second existentiell understanding in which faith decides to accept Jesus as God's revelation.
66. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 293.

67. Rudolf Bultmann attributes the discovery of the phenomenon of "pre-understanding" to Martin Heidegger. Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann, p. 98.
68. See discussion, Section Two., Chapter One, "Righteousness: An Eschatological Term", pp. 155ff; Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 68; Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 142.
69. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 112.
70. See, *Ibid*, pp. 112f; Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 142.
71. See, Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 25f; Karl Barth is impressed that what really irks Rudolf Bultmann about "mythological thinking" is its "objectifying". Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 106.
72. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 231. This point is recognized explicitly by Martin Schmidt in his comment that in accordance to John Locke, John Wesley accepted that all knowledge proceeded from the senses; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 73. See also, Williams, Theology, p. 31.
73. Schubert Ogden notes that a criticism of Rudolf Bultmann's affirmation of the necessity for a "preunderstanding" is that it compromises the Reformer's principle of sola scriptura - sola gratia. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 55.
74. Please consult the Appendix for a discussion of this. See, Schubert Ogden's avowal of this. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 113.
75. Schubert Ogden points out that Rudolf Bultmann speaks of natural man having the "possibility in principle" of understanding himself authentically, though not the "possibility in fact" which is only a possibility for the one who by faith has received the proclamation. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 117.
76. Colin Williams briefly states John Wesley's position. He argues rightly that John Wesley did not teach that reason could produce a "natural theology" that would be harmonious with a "revealed theology" (as Thomas Aquinas allowed--though, I might say, conceding its difficulty). Moreover, reason could not take the veil away and show us the unknown God. Indeed, in our relation to God, reason could not help us; Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 30f.
77. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 232.
78. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 18; Bainton, Here I Stand, p. 219; F. C. Copleston, Aquinas (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1955), p. 52. Though both Martin Luther and John Wesley affirm that "faith" gives this knowledge, they differ as to when this "faith" is given. While Martin Luther understands the enlightenment to come with justification, John Wesley allows that even a natural person can have this enlightenment through a general faith; see, Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 233.
79. See relevant discussions, Section Two, Chapter Two, "Revelation and Pre-Understanding", pp. 237ff; Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 108; Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 106.

80. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 108.
81. Ibid.
82. Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 100.
83. Ibid.
84. Why are such Scriptural books as John, Romans or Hebrews which supposedly express the existential religious consciousness written in such formidable, logical and rational language when they could have been expressed in language more suitable?
85. See above discussion, Section Two, Chapter One, "Righteousness: An Eschatological Term", particularly pp. 187ff, 237; Karl Barth remarks rightly that demythologizing is only a "by-product" of Rudolf Bultmann's methodological approach of translating the New Testament into the language of philosophy. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 120.
86. See above, p. 334; Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 49.
87. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 71.
88. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 120f.
89. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 201. Martin Schmidt's declaration that John Wesley sharply recognized and vindicated the essence of the Biblical message in the face of the spirit of the age is relevant and agreeable to the present point; Schmidt, John Wesley, Vol. 2, Part 2, pp. 214f.
90. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 228; Macquarrie, Existentialism, pp. 29f; Stephen, Eighteenth Century Thought, vol. 1, p. 25.
91. Wesley, Works, ed. Jackson, ol. 7, pp. 226-28; S. E. Frost, Basic Teachings of The Great Philosophers: A Survey of Their Basic Ideas, new and enlarged ed. (New York: Doubleday & Co., Dolphin Books, 1962), p. 164.
92. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 7, p. 228.
93. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 209.
94. Paul Tillich labels this tradition with which Rudolf Bultmann congenially fits as "voluntarism". He traces this tradition from Schelling to Schopenhauer to Nietzsche and then to Heidegger. Paul Tillich, Perspectives on the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Protestant Theology, ed. with an intro. by Carl E. Braaten (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 91.
95. Arthur Schopenhauer, "The World as Will and Idea", in Body and Mind: Readings in Philosophy, ed. G. N. A. Vesey (London: George Allen and Unwin, n.d.), p. 122.
96. The "identity theory" proposes that mentalistic and physicalistic expressions differ in significance or connotation, but refer to one and the same phenomenon. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Paul Edwards, editor in chief, 8 vols. (London: Collier-MacMillan

Publishers, 1972) vol. 5, s.v. "Mind-Body Problem" by Jerome Shaffer, p. 339.

97. Ibid. p. 124.
98. Note the appearance of his monographs "Faith as Venture" of 1928; "The Significance of the Historical Jesus for the Theology of Paul", 1929; his review of Adolf Schlatter's Faith in the New Testament of 1929; "The Historicity of Man and Faith" of 1930. Charles W. Kegley, ed., The Theology of Rudolf Bultmann (London: SCM Press, 1966), pp. 296-98.
99. This is everywhere agreed upon. See above discussion, pp. 78f ; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 203; vol. 2, part 2, p. 31; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 65.
100. See above discussion, "The Ground of Justification", pp. 13f; Colin Williams emphasizes throughout his book that for John Wesley faith is "a personal relationship to the living Christ"; Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 68f. Martin Schmidt concurs by stating that faith is "the constant communion between God and man, an uninterrupted communication which draws the whole of life into its sphere of influence". Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 71. Moreover, faith in Jesus Christ unites the believer with the total vitality of Jesus Christ's being; that is, with the divine life itself. Schmidt, vol. 2, part 2, p. 209.

The sense of faith as being "spoken" to by God or "seeing" God in Christ reconciling the world is also noted; Williams, John Wesley's Theology, pp. 64, 71.
101. See above discussion, "The Ground of Justification", p. 13f; Martin Schmidt brings out well this point. He affirms that according to John Wesley faith's proper object is Jesus Christ, and through Him God. Christian faith rests entirely on the power of Jesus' life, His death and its merits, and His resurrection. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 13f.
102. Macquarrie, Existentialist Theology, p. 90.
103. Ibid, p. 109.
104. See above discussion, pp. 131f ; Colin Williams stresses that for John Wesley man has no natural ability to do anything to return to God. But God through prevenient grace is at work within the natural man to enable him to make a free response to his transforming presence. This is clear. However, even though Colin Williams can say tersely that faith for Wesley is a "gift" and that justification "arises ... from a word of God to us -- 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee'", the impression I receive is that Colins Williams prefers to accent the nature of faith as the God enabled response to what God has already been accomplishing in the willing penitent rather than what He is about to give. He says, "Faith opens the door for the continuing work of God within us" and again "Faith is the opening of the life to Christ".

Colin Williams' portrays "faith" as more of a mediate rather than the immediate gift of God which John Wesley was apt to emphasize. What goes missing in Colin Williams' account is the supernatural gift's radical nature as over and against man, distinct

from him, coming "downward" from outside man's world, so that what is possessed of God in the eternal dimension, now decisively invades man and is transferred into man's possession. See, Williams, Wesley, pp. 47f, 69-72.

105. See above, pp. 311f ; Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 97.
106. Further, Buri says that Rudolf Bultmann's presentation of Christ in terms of his "existential significance" de-historicizes the New Testament's statements concerning the cross and resurrection so that they are reduced to dispensable mythological expressions of authentic self-understanding. Moreover, he says that Rudolf Bultmann's theory of myth as the expression of self-understanding cannot adequately account for the meaning of myth for the earliest New Testament community. The atoning sacrifice and resurrection which appear to modern interpreters as myth and the expression of a self-understanding are assumed to be to the man of the New Testament the actual occurrence on which his self-understanding is based. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 108f.

Schubert Ogden points out that Rudolf Bultmann wants to say that God's action is "objectively" "hidden" in the proclamation and is discernible only by one who opens himself to it in faith and love. However, as he does say by way of qualification, this is not to be understood as "mythology" (one with a view such as John Wesley) understands it as an event which happens alongside other events in the continuum of worldly occurrences. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 92.
107. Roger Scruton, Kant, Past Master Series, gen. ed. Keith Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 26.
108. Rudolf Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, pp. 101, 140.
109. See above, p. 314; Schubert Ogden acknowledges that Rudolf Bultmann's description implies that faith itself is something other than "piety" or "feeling". Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 22f.
110. The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology, Alan Richardson and John Bowden (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), s. v. "Mysticism" by E. J. Tinsley.
111. *Ibid.*; Schubert Ogden argues that the description of "mysticism" for Rudolf Bultmann is unjustified. "Self-understanding" does not suggest a "feeling" or "ecstasy" involving a flight from history but that which takes place in history. This characterization of "feeling" as a "flight from history" assumes the existentialist presupposition that faith as a "feeling" is a "flight from history". At any rate, this criterion which Schubert Ogden uses to judge Rudolf Bultmann regarding mysticism is just one criteria among others that must be considered. See, Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 67.
112. Helmut Thielicke among others argued that Rudolf Bultmann's thinking "stands in the tradition of Bewusstseinstheologie (Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Herrmann)". Schubert Ogden may be right that to assert this is to misunderstand profoundly Rudolf Bultmann's intention, but certainly there is a resemblance between him and them. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 65f.

113. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 60.

114. Colin Williams accurately sets forth John Wesley's understanding of faith as a "divine conviction God works in the soul". He strikes a cautious note about confusing "assurance" with an emotional feeling and relying upon experience. His judgment is based on the many years of Methodist experience and is a modern reflection on the conviction's abuse.

However, John Wesley does not surround with caution his lifetime affirmation of faith as an inner, divine impression. He acknowledges it may be abused, but is more apt to be on the other end defending it and the experience of it. See, "The Witness of the Spirit: Discourse 2", in Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 293.

Colin Williams appears to draw a false distinction. Because, as he rightly says, John Wesley withdrew his belief that a sense of pardon was necessary to justification, John Wesley, consequently also saw that not to do so would make justification dependent upon feeling. Upon this premise, Colin Williams bases his assertion that "Wesley was aware that it is just as wrong to make an internal condition (of right feelings or tempers) as it is to make an external condition (of right actions or works) a necessary basis for justification" Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 106.

While it may be true that John Wesley recognized it would be wrong to require some internal condition for justification, for him to withdraw the sense of forgiveness as necessary to justification was not to withdraw the necessity of a divine, inner sense (that "Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me") in order to receive justification. He united saving faith and "experience" up to the last decade of his life when he then seemed willing to give the benefit of the doubt to a person who, from all accounts, had true faith but never the inner sense of faith. One must pay heed to the refinements to which John Wesley submitted justifying faith over his life.

Though he does not intend to correct John Wesley, Colin Williams inadvertently might do so by warning that making an internal condition necessary for justification can become a salvation by works. Moreover, he alerts us to the danger which John Wesley recognized later to a certain extent that an ill-conceived internal criterion may cause those who have not experienced it to despair. Refer to Colin Williams' discussion in Wesley's Theology, pp. 105-114; see above, Section I, Chapter Three.

115. Martin Schmidt supplies Dr. John Whitehead's eulogistic remarks that in John Wesley's theology faith in Jesus Christ united the believer with the divine life itself; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 209.

116. John Tinsley makes a distinction between the two kinds of mysticism. New Dictionary of Christian Theology, s.v. "Mysticism" by Tinsley.

117. See Karl Barth's statement to him that what materially impressed him about Rudolf Bultmann's comments was that for him "the really irksome thing about 'mythological thinking' turns out to be its 'objectifying'". Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 106.

118. Stephen, Eighteenth Century Thought, vol. 1, p. 138.
119. Colin Brown, Miracles and the Critical Mind (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), p. 54.
120. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 213; Brown, Miracles, pp. 71f.
121. See John Wesley's staunch defense of miracles in his sermon, "On Divine Providence". He said, "If it please God to continue the life of any of his servants he will suspend that or any other law of nature." Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 546. Martin Schmidt includes in his discussion John Wesley's retort to Bishop Warburton's argument that miracles belonged to the early days of Christianity. John Wesley affirmed that he was convinced that miracles could happen just as well today as formerly, if God so willed. Nobody should try to limit the Holy Spirit. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 224.

Colin Williams notes that John Wesley held that one of the ways the Holy Spirit brings believers to a conviction of sin was "normally through preaching and miracles". Williams, Theology, p. 98.
122. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, pp. 40f.
123. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 381f.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 383.
125. *Ibid.*
126. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 26, p. 169.
127. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 9, p. 291.
128. Wesley, Journal, vol. 5, pp. 303f; Brown, Miracles, p.90.
129. Brown, Miracles, p. 99; John Wesley, who was less than complimentary toward David Hume, said, "David Hume ... the most insolent despiser of truth and virtue that ever appeared in the world", Wesley, Journal, vol. 5, p. 458. It is doubtful whether Rudolf Bultmann would have more greatly inspired him.
130. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 22-42; Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 106f.
131. Schubert Ogden is unimpressed by attempts to break Bultmann's demand for demythologization and establish "mythical events" such as the resurrection as objective historical events. He finds all arguments, e.g. Karl Barth's which he says assumes that because such events are possible they are actual, specious and are such that "any unbiased mind would regard as indefensible". Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 135f. However, it must remain to be seen if Schubert Ogden can prove such events were not objective historical events.
132. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 251.
133. Martin Schmidt states that for John Wesley faith is "personal certainty and confidence that God has saved the believer, through Jesus Christ, from eternal damnation." Moreover, it is "a filial con-

fidence in God's love". He observes that in John Wesley's letter to Thomas Church he argues that the love of God is the elixir of life, the remedy for all the evils of a disordered world which spreads abroad peace and joy. Further, he urges that the one whom Jesus has saved from sin is firmly convinced, although not every moment, that nothing can separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. See, Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 195, 203; vol. 2, part 2, p. 14.

134. Althaus, Martin Luther, pp. 60ff.
135. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, pp. 116f.
136. Blaise Pascal reflected, "It is not certain that everything is uncertain." Blaise Pascal, Pascal Pensées, trans. with an intro. by A. J. Krailsheimer (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1977), p. 214.
137. See Richard Baxter's comments. Hugh Martin, Puritanism And Richard Baxter (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 151.
138. Schubert Ogden confirms this when he states that for Rudolf Bultmann the factual possibility of a new life which is opened up by faith is not the believer's possession but rather that which must be laid hold of by decision. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 63.
139. Colin Williams states that John Wesley affirmed that we can be in real possession of salvation now. Williams, John Wesley's Theology, p. 41; see discussion above, Section One, Chapter One, "The Scope of Salvation".
140. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 161f.
141. Bultmann, Essays, pp. 59, 175.
142. See above, Section Two, Chapter Three, endnote 52. Bultmann, Theology, vol. 1, p. 314.
143. Bainton, Here I Stand, p. 64.
144. See above, pp. 294f.
145. Ibid.
146. Authorities agree that, for John Wesley, repentance (the "porch of religion") both always preceded faith and was a necessary condition of saving faith. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 419; Wesley, Letters, vol. 7, p. 222; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 31, 54; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 59.

Repentance was a profound awareness and despair about one's own sin. It was a conviction of one's lostness and a trembling before the threatening judgment of God. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 31, 54; Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 59; see discussion above, "Who are Justified? The Guilty Ungodly", pp. 69f, endnote 38.

147. Colin Williams states that both Luther and Calvin included two movements in justifying faith: (1) repentance (2) trust in Christ. Further, he says that "repentance works" for them are works of

faith. Gordon Rupp, in an interview, stated that scholarly opinion was divided regarding Martin Luther's understanding of repentance's place. Student's personal interview, Cambridge, 22 September 1986.

Strictly speaking, John Calvin did not view repentance as part of faith but distinct from it and a fruit of saving faith. See, Colin Williams' discussion, Wesley's Theology, pp. 59-66; John Calvin, A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, ed. Hugh T. Kerr (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969), pp. 94f.

148. The two aspects of faith or "obedience", the surrender of one's self-contrived securities and the renunciation of attempting to acquire one's life, and the "yes" response to the word of proclamation are mentioned, mainly by implication, in Schubert Ogden's explication of Rudolf Bultmann's theology; Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 61, 86.

149. This is not contradicted by Schubert Ogden's discussion when he states that the proclamation in commanding us to believe in the death and resurrection of Christ as the eschatological occurrence asks the individual whether he is willing to understand himself as the word instructs him. Ibid., p. 86.

150. Colin Williams speaks of John Wesley's conception of faith in terms of both "reception" and "acceptance". He observes that faith involves a "synergism" in which God creates in man the freedom to receive or resist his grace. He appreciates especially John Wesley's contribution in breaking the deterministic framework of the logical doctrine of predestination by showing that God's grace works at every stage within us to enable us to respond freely to his presence. This is an important point.

However appreciative one may be of this point, clarity regarding this "synergism" will help us in trying to get John Wesley's accent right. Saving faith for John Wesley was two movements of grace and one movement of response. He emphasizes God in His sovereignty offering the supernatural gift of faith, when He wills, to the inner man which He graciously strengthens in order to receive Him. This stress which includes the two movements of grace is given inadequate treatment in Colin Williams assessment of justifying faith. I have discussed John Wesley's conception more at length earlier in the dissertation. See, Section One, Chapter Four. "Saving Faith As a Gift/Decision and as a State", pp. 131ff. See, Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 70-73.

151. John Wesley said, "So certain it is that no miracles whatever which were ever yet wrought in the world were effectual to prove the most glaring truth to those that hardened their hearts against it". Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 260, 258f; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 11, pp. 310ff.

152. Dr. John Whitehead, John Wesley's friend and early biographer, affirmed that he had proved Christian experience to be a reality which claimed and secured for itself no less a validity than the external, sensuous reality. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 209.

153. Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 263.

154. Martin Schmidt cites Thomas Rutherford's criticism that John Wesley's appeal to inner assurance, derived from the Holy Spirit, avoided further testing because it had its central point in indeterminate "feeling". Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 364; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 171.
155. Wesley, Minutes, 1744, p. 6.
156. Schubert Ogden also comments that rather than representing God's act as one objective happening alongside others, Rudolf Bultmann's existential analysis understands God's act as a fully personal act objectively hidden and perceivable only where there is corresponding change in the self-understanding of the perceiver. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 93.
157. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 1, p. 198.
158. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
159. *Ibid.*, p. 198.
160. See my relevant remarks in endnote #151.
161. Bultmann, Essays, p. 52; Howe O. Thomas, Jr., "Rudolf Bultmann's Interpretation of Paul's Understanding of the Law" (University of Bristol: Essay, June, 1985); This is confirmed by Schubert Ogden's observation that, according to Rudolf Bultmann, "fallen" man cannot free himself but only the kerygmatic Word of God can awaken his self-understanding. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 23, 74f.
162. Colin Williams charts the progression of John Wesley's belief regarding the instantaneous experience of conversion. In 1738 Peter Böhler convinced him it was instantaneous. On the authority of A.S. Yates, he notes he modified this to a "sounder" view that there is irreconcilable variability in the Holy Spirit's operation in the souls of persons.

Colin Williams allows that for John Wesley a conversion may be "an instantaneous crisis event" or a "more gradual change"; yet, it was always accompanied by the awareness of real change. Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 101f.

John Wesley's teaching on this point might be clarified and sharpened. Involved in faith is both time and experience. As far as "experience", I have already argued that "saving faith" was ordinarily "experiential". He did acknowledge that God "imperceptibly works in some a gradually increasing assurance of His love". However, these are rather "those exempt cases"; Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, pp. 46f.

Regarding the time factor in "saving faith", John Wesley consistently conceived justification to be instantaneous. He did not disavow exceptions but they were exceptions and not the rule -- a point which Martin Schmidt corroborates. Citing experience as his evidence, John Wesley told "John Smith" that the twelve or thirteen truly pious persons with whom he was acquainted, knew "the day when the love of God was first shed abroad in their hearts". Wesley, Letters, vol. 2, p. 47.

Martin Schmidt sums up nicely the gist of the dispute between John Wesley and "John Smith" as the question whether faith had a clearly defined beginning. John Wesley argues that it does. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 202.

On another issue, I am unclear as to Colin Williams's judgment regarding justification as a "state". He states that John Wesley emphasizes that justification is not a "state", but a moment-by-moment relationship. Is this to say he stresses that it is not a "state"? Or, though accepting that it is a state, he emphasises its moment-by-moment nature? It would seem that if it is a relationship, then it is "a state of being related".

Colin Williams remarks the relationship of justification is moment-by-moment and not a "once-for-all event" which would then make us independent of Christ. Actually, it is a "once-for-all" event in that it occurs and is complete in a punctiliar moment. However, it also continues in time to be maintained moment-by-moment by continual dependence on Christ. See above, Section One, Chapter Four, p. 137; Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 68f.

John Wesley, though by the 1770's guarded in his affirmation, consistently accepted from the beginning to the end that justification was a state which was "inexpressibly great and glorious". Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 10, p. 389; Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 265.

163. In setting forth Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the new existence, Schubert Ogden confirms that what the New Testament means by eschatological existence Rudolf Bultmann means by existentiell self-understanding. This existence in which one lives in freedom from the past and openness for the future is what Paul speaks of as being a "new creation", or John as having passed from death to "eternal life". What separates the New Testament from Jewish apocalypticism is its conviction that the time of salvation has already broken in and the life of the world to come is even now a reality for the believer. Particularly in Paul and John, we find the demythologization of apocalyptic eschatology. The decisive eschatological occurrence is not an imminent cosmic catastrophe but the fact that God is now judging the world in Jesus Christ. Though it is implied, Schubert Ogden does not draw Rudolf Bultmann's equation between God's judgment and justification. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 62; See above, Section Two, Chapter One, pp. 171-73.

164. John Wesley's acceptance of both a present and a final justification apparently goes unnoticed by Martin Schmidt. On at least two occasions, he states John Wesley's position as holding "one and one only" justification. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 1, p. 43; vol. 2, part 2, p. 76; see above, Section One, Chapter Four, "Final Justification".

On the other hand, Colin Williams rightly assesses John Wesley view as "double justification". He notes that while he accepted sanctification as a condition of "final" justification, it was not to be viewed as an achievement which merits salvation but as a gift. Williams, Wesley's Theology, p. 68.

165. See above, Section Two, Chapter Three, pp. 317f. Karl Barth asks him if all the New Testament has to say about life in faith can be subsumed under the rubric of "detachment from the world". Karl

Barth does not believe that this does justice to the life of faith as gratitude and response to grace. Further, this new existence is connected with the Lord who stands over and against us and is there before we are. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 94.

166. Schubert Ogden thinks that when Rudolf Bultmann speaks of the life of faith as the life of radical freedom from the whole sphere of what is objectively visible and controllable, he does not mean the dualist's devaluation of "sense" or "matter". Rather, he means an attitude of "inner distance from all worldly attachments". That is, he means the dialectical attitude of Paul of having wives but living "as though they had none". Though if I understand Schubert Ogden rightly, I concur that Rudolf Bultmann does not intend to devalue "sense" and "matter". However, for my reasons given in the ensuing argument in the main text, I, nevertheless, believe he does devalue them. See, Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 62f.
167. Paul Althaus states that Martin Luther held that good works were necessary as a witness of faith and therewith give glory to the heavenly Father. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 249.
168. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 210ff.
169. Martin Schmidt comments, "Thus for him there was nothing in life outside the sphere of God's influence." Schmidt, John Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 204; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, pp. 535-550.
170. Colin Williams mentions the Scriptural, "objective" marks or tests which John Wesley used for corroborating the experience of assurance. As he says, these would be certain to follow the faith relationship to Christ. Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 110f; See above, Section One, Chapter Four, "The Fruits of Faith".
171. As one example, please note John Wesley's letter regarding the change in the colliers of Kingswood. Wesley, Works, ed. T. Jackson, vol. 13, p. 309. Martin Schmidt states John Wesley was convinced that genuine religion was able to heal all the evils and all the miseries of a disordered world, making man happy and spreading peace and joy all around it. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 70.
172. In his sermon on "The Repentance of Believers", he does not distinguish between pure and inordinate "desire of earthly things or pleasures". Rather, "desire" in general is cast in a negative light. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 338.
173. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 93.
174. Indeed, John Wesley did study the experiences of the justified seeking to draw generalizations about God's pattern of working based on his repeated observations.
175. Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 51.
176. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 55.
177. Although this paper cannot treat adequately John Wesley's understanding of "Christian perfection", a comment regarding Colin Williams' assessment is relevant to this matter of holy love's

content as moral. Colin Williams asserts that perfection as freedom from sin is not measured by "objective moral standards" but "unbroken conscious dependence upon Christ". He says John Wesley rejected putting perfection on the basis of "objective standards of justice" when he distinguished between two kinds of sin, sin measured absolutely by the "perfect law", and sin viewed in terms of conscious separation from Christ.

He is correct in saying that perfection was viewed as moment-by-moment communion with God in Christ. However, one must take exception to the implication that John Wesley set moral standards over and against this personal relationship with Christ. Rather than conflicting, these two were in accord with one another. Indeed, John Wesley argued that if one obeyed Jesus Christ completely and followed Him alone, then one would also satisfy the Law of God; Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 16, 54f.

As John Wesley declared in his sermon "The Law Established Through Faith: Discourse 2", love to God fulfils the "whole negative 'law'" (including, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill") as well as the "positive" law. This fulfillment was not to the external part only but also cleansed the heart from vile affections; Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 42.

Colin Williams is right in saying that rising to a required moral standard of holiness did not, according to John Wesley, merit salvation. However, John Wesley viewed the fulfillment of the moral standard as arising from God's love to us and our grateful love to Him.

Furthermore, rather than differentiating between the sin of breaching the "perfect law" and the sin of breaking communion with Christ as Colin Williams maintains, John Wesley distinguished between the "perfect law" (the Adamic law which encompassed both wilful sins and sins of "infirmity") and wilful sin ("a voluntary transgression of a known law"). Man was culpable for wilful sin -- which would include a wilful breach of a moral commandment -- and not for those of ignorance, mistake, or disease. H.O. Thomas, John Wesley's Understanding of Essentials/Opinions, p. 157. Please refer also to Colin William's discussion in his, Wesley's Theology, pp. 175-179.

178. Wesley, Letters, vol. 4, p. 299.
179. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 120.
180. See Colin Williams' discussion of this; Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 174ff.
181. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 112.
182. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 2, p. 169.
183. Wesley, Letters, vol. 5, p. 314.
184. John Wesley's hopeful vision of what God could do was expressed in the 1744 Conference Minutes: "Q. What may we reasonably believe to be God's design, in raising up the Preachers, called Methodists? A. To reform the nation, more particularly the Church; to spread scriptural holiness over the land." Wesley, Minutes, 1744, p. 9. In reference to what John Wesley's "optimism of grace" and his doctrine of Christian perfection means to the

Church's understanding of its mission, Colin Williams approvingly quotes the exhortation that "we dare set no limit to what the grace of God can do for a man here and now". Williams, Wesley's Theology, pp. 204, 78.

185. Karl Barth acknowledges the rightful commendation that Rudolf Bultmann has received because he has broken out of the existentialist scheme, particularly in his declaration of the necessity of the saving event Jesus Christ for authentic life. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 103.
186. Karl Barth cannot but help see in Rudolf Bultmann's concern for making Biblical exegesis relevant and interesting for its culture despisers an apologist's concern (of Schleiermacher's stature). He states that he has shown an "unmistakable pastoral concern for modern man with his electricity and atomic physics". However, he comments that Rudolf Bultmann and his disciples are annoyed at his being called an apologist. Karl Barth sees this aspect of his work as not the most important side of his work but a "notable by product". Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 118f.

To me, though it may be argued that it is not Rudolf Bultmann's only or indisputable, primary theological motivation, his theological project with its existentialist interpretation and demythologizing implies that the "translating" of the Gospel in the context of our day is integral to the project. John Macquarrie sees Rudolf Bultmann as basically an "apologist" whose primary motive in his work is to recommend the Christian kerygma to the uniquely modern situation. Schubert Ogden rejects this assessment. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 171.

Rudolf Bultmann accused Karl Barth in 1928 of failing to enter into debate with modern philosophy. Dogmatics, he argued, "must have the coming generation in mind in relation to both pastors and congregations. What are the thoughts that live today behind our educated people and in our papers? Must theology always arrive after the event?" Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 39.

In 1952, Rudolf Bultmann wrote to Karl Barth, "This problem (the problem of "translation")--and naturally you fail to see this--entails the task of making Christian proclamation intelligible to modern man in such a way that he achieves the awareness that tua res agitur ("your own cause is at stake")." Further, he declared that because modern thinking is no longer mythological it is shut off from the New Testament whose thinking is mythological. That this is the case gave the spur to his hermeneutical efforts. Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann, pp. 88, 95.

Martin Schmidt sees John Wesley as one set over and against the spirit of his age in contrast to someone like Friedrich Schleiermacher who was an advocate of the harmony between Christianity and the universe. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 214f.

187. Bultmann, New Testament and Mythology, p. 47.
188. Ibid., p. 48.
189. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 64.
190. Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, p. 95.

191. Schubert Ogden's discussion illuminates the fact that Rudolf Bultmann conceived of the "common basis" necessarily presupposed by all the ways in which modern man understands himself to be constituted as part of the world-picture formed by natural science. The common understanding of modern man is to view the world as a lawfully ordered unity "closed" to the interference of non-natural agents. The method of science and the world-picture correlative with it make the New Testament's "mythological world-picture" untenable for modern man.

Schubert Ogden disputes John Macquarrie's criticism that Rudolf Bultmann, accepting the nineteenth century pseudo-scientific view of a closed universe, assigns anything not acceptable to the modern mind to the realm of myth. He claims that John Macquarrie does not take into consideration Rudolf Bultmann's distinction between science's results and science's method. While this is a distinction one must keep in mind, I do not think this negates John Macquarrie's point and the argument that Rudolf Bultmann's understanding of the scientific method by definition excludes the reference of worldly happenings to transcendent and supernatural causes. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 31-35.

192. John Wesley remarked that "men of learning" persuaded themselves they were free from "superstition, the disease of fools and cowards, always righteous overmuch"; Wesley, Works, vol. 1, pp. 253f.
193. See above, Section Two, Chapter One, pp. 191-93, 208f : Schubert Ogden notes that Rudolf Bultmann asserts that Paul's implied demythologization of Gnostic and mystery ideas and John's elimination of apocalyptic eschatology demonstrates that the New Testament both permits and requires existential interpretation (using Heidegger's conception). Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 64.
194. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 90f; Karl Barth states he is baffled by Rudolf Bultmann who maintains he is rooted in the Reformation, particularly Luther, but who has adopted the theme of the anti-Reformation, or at least the un-Reformation. By that he means that Rudolf Bultmann was, in the manner of the Enlightenment, preoccupied with the new understanding of man and the world based on reason and revelation to the extent that the sole theme of theology, the message of the Bible, was relegated to the background.

Theology was engaged in a discussion with a court of appeal quite foreign to the message. Theology's authority rested in the fact that it seemed to be establishing or to have established itself in the eyes of that court.

While Schubert Ogden is correct in saying that Rudolf Bultmann's theology is informed by a different ontology from that of the Enlightenment and other theologies which partook of its spirit, he, nevertheless, shares its spirit, assumptions and procedure. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 65-66.

While I essentially agree with Karl Barth, one may clarify his judgment. Rudolf Bultmann gave *prima facie* a high profile to the message of the Bible. However, the result of interpreting it according to the hermeneutic of the philosophical, existential-ontological analysis meant that it was relegated to secondary importance behind that of the philosophical understanding.

195. Karl Barth wonders, and I think rightly so, whether the New Testament proceeds as Rudolf Bultmann conceives it, by beginning with man's subjective experiences, with man as the recipient of its message. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, p. 92. See also Rudolf Bultmann's and Karl Barth's exchange regarding this issue of "anthropology"; Jaspert, Barth - Bultmann Letters, pp. 98f, 106.

Schubert Ogden acknowledges that the criticism which sees the existential interpretation inevitably leading to a dissolution of theology into anthropology is not without a point. He further notes how Rudolf Bultmann courts such a charge by quoting his saying that "every assertion about God is simultaneously an assertion about man and vice versa". Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 148.
196. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 321.
197. Upon reflecting about the rise of the Methodist Society, John Wesley says he could not but observe, "This is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity." John Wesley, The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, gen. ed. Richard P. Heitzenrater, textual editor Frank Baker, Vol. 9: The Methodist Societies: History, Nature and Design, ed. Rupert E. Davies (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), p. 258. Martin Schmidt affirms that right through John Wesley's life his steady aim was the restoration of primitive Christianity to the present age. Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 187; vol. 2, part 1, p. 239.
198. Karl Barth seems to highlight these two particular theological influences. Bartsch, Kerygma and Myth, pp. 122f.
199. Actually, the judgment of one to the "left" of him, Fritz Burl, was that his theology involves a "complete destruction of the traditional Christian conception of Heilsgeschichte". Ogden, Christ Without Myth, pp. 106, 37.
200. Ibid., p. 37; see also, p. 42.
201. In his Farther Appeal, he reminds the Church of the fate of the Old Testament Israelites and warns England against toying with God's offer of grace. See, Schmidt, Wesley, vol. 2, part 2, p. 78.
202. Dr. Trapp interpreted Methodist doctrine and practices as tending "to the destruction of souls" and "as scandal to Christianity". Tyerman, The Life and Times of The Rev. John Wesley, vol. 1, p. 330. George Horne insinuates that if Methodist doctrine prevailed, church order would cease along with "certainty in the faith". Horne, Sixteen Sermons, p. 67.
203. This assessment is akin to the summary judgment of Schubert Ogden's that by arguing both that authentic historicity is factually possible only in Jesus Christ and that demythologization is unqualifiedly necessary, Rudolf Bultmann "completely nullifies his own constructive proposal for a solution to the contemporary theological problem." Finally, he returns the verdict on his theology that it is internally inconsistent. Ogden, Christ Without Myth, p. 125.
204. Wesley, Works, ed.-in-chief Frank Baker, vol. 3, p. 493.
205. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 176.

UNBELIEVING AND BELIEVING EXISTENCE:

THE RELATION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH

Rudolf Bultmann argues that the new understanding of faith and "believing" existence arises out of the old self-understanding and "unbelieving" existence. The heathen talk about God and search for him. Although when they speak of or to God, they are not really speaking to God because they are not speaking to the true God who is only known by faith. Nevertheless, their speaking of God reveals a certain understanding of themselves, and understanding delivered over to the enigma, the overmastering power.¹ In their search for God and the answer to their quest given in their formulations of God, they erect an illusion. Nonetheless, they show a knowledge of being claimed of the moment combined with the desire for freedom.² It is just such persons who can understand God's revelation. Rudolf Bultmann declares that this man can come to God precisely because he is a sinner.³ Indeed, this "unbelieving" existence does not have access to God, but, nonetheless, it knows of God. It does not have access to God because it has constructed this world of an existence which understands itself without faith.⁴ Even unbelieving existence, the self-understanding as a being with historical existence, known of the specific moment with its demand just as does faith. The distinction is that faith is obedient to the judging and forgiving Word of God whereas unbelief disobeys the specific moment.⁵ This understanding counteracts the notion which John Wesley held that man has a special "organ" or a "better self" within him that is responsive to the divine. This is what faith denies.⁶

The pre-understanding out of which faith arises and its bearing upon faith is further illumined by Rudolf Bultmann's discussion of the crucial and relevant relationship between philosophy and theology. The strategic common ground of philosophy and theology is that they share the same object, man.

Albeit, philosophy views man as "the natural man" and theology sees him as "the man of faith". More particularly, both the existential philosophical description of man and theology refer to certain phenomena; i.e., the historical nature of existence and decision-making character of existence.⁷ That is, the structural elements of existence and the analysis presented by existential philosophy are valid for existence in faith.⁸ Faith asserts that it is unbelieving existence which comes to faith.⁹ All theological Christian concepts contain the understanding and being that belongs to man as he exists at all.¹⁰ Theology must rely on the existential analysis of man if it wants to make faith clear in a conceptual way.¹¹

Throughout our study of Rudolf Bultmann, we have noted that he has taken over Martin Heidegger's existential-ontological analysis. For instance, Rudolf Bultmann acknowledges Martin Heidegger's concept of "authentic possibility of being" informed his own concept of "future" as well as clarifying his concept of sin.¹² Indeed, faith does not change man's nature into something else, possess any new demonstrable qualities, supplement, or correct philosophy. Philosophy does not allow for correction because it claims to cover existence as a whole (theology can only correct at single points -- substituting "love" ἀγάπη for anxiety). Theology must either accept, reject, or ignore it.¹³

The question arises: are not existence in faith and existence apart from faith such different things that it is impossible to speak of existence as the common theme of theology and philosophy?¹⁴ Rudolf Bultmann answers that philosophy knows of unbelief and faith. The philosophical description of the structure of existence perceives clearly the phenomenon theology calls unbelief, it just calls it freedom. Philosophy knows of faith because it knows of the questionableness of human existence which is an essential part of its freedom.¹⁵ Existential analysis knows of the possibility of laying hold of man's authenticity in the decision and in the resolve that belongs to his existence. However, existential analysis does not specify but remains open to what

particular thing is resolved.¹⁶ It knows ontologically of the possibility of faith's concrete, personal existence but not what occurs in faith's ontic or existentiell, concrete, personal existence.¹⁷

Rudolf Bultmann uses the analogy of friendship to illustrate the distinction between what philosophy knows ontologically and existentially and what theology knows ontically and existentially. A friendless person knows what friendship is but on the other hand does not know it. Furthermore, once he finds a friend, he does not know any more about friendship than he previously did. What he does know is his friend and himself anew. In knowing his friend in the "event" of friendship, the events -- the work, struggle, joy, pain -- become "new" in the sense that is valid and visible only to him.¹⁸ Speaking of philosophy, he states, "Precisely when it knows the determination for freedom by which existence asserts control of itself, it knows of another possibility, the rejection of that determination."¹⁹

What kind of knowledge of faith does philosophy have? "It knows it as a lost, meaningless possibility," says Rudolf Bultmann.²⁰ It is lost because human existence which persists in this freedom has its actuality only in it. It is meaningless because everything that has meaning for philosophy is defined in terms of existence in this freedom. Therefore, when it hears of faith referred to as an ever present possibility and reality, it can understand by faith only a resolve being realized within existence determined by freedom.²¹

In contrast, faith understands itself as a specific resolve, a specific decision in a concrete situation which is determined by the Word of proclamation and the neighbor. Faith declares that this specific resolve reconstitutes the basic conception of existence so that henceforth an existence in faith exists alongside the existence outside faith. This specific claim is faith's offence and is unprovable.

Since faith is an eschatological event and an act of God which affects man, as justifying faith "it is not a phenomenon of existence" which is demonstrable.²² The man of faith remains in existence and does not have a

new structure of existence created for him; yet, the man of faith comes out of existence, out of unbelief. Moreover, faith, an eschatological event in which reconciliation becomes a reality, "leads back to the original creation". According to Rudolf Bultmann, "This means that the lost, meaningless possibility of faith as original obedience, of which philosophy knows, is made actual in the Christian faith."²³

Rudolf Bultmann concludes his argument with the following propositions: pre-Christian existence includes a pre-understanding of the Christian proclamation. As philosophy explicates this understanding of existence it also explicates this pre-understanding. When this analysis is introduced into the work of theology, it becomes a new statement because its character as pre-understanding is made clear.²⁴ On the other hand, the pre-understanding cannot understand faith because it is not provable through reason. In addition, since faith's character is a continual overcoming of unbelief, then faith and the development of an understanding in faith can be theologically explicated only in continual debate with the understanding of natural existence.

Because there is no other existence than that which constitutes itself in freedom, the formal structures of this existence are valid for all human existence. Therefore, they are valid for existence confronted by the proclamation, whether existence outside of faith and or for existence in faith.²⁵ Rudolf Bultmann keeps the question present before him of whether or not in fact theology after all corrects ontological analysis and proposes an ontology to compete with philosophy. He resoundly answers, "No!" Existential analysis determines that death is the phenomenon within man's existence that allows man's limitation to become visible and is the limit that constitutes him a totality. When theology gives death's function to the proclamation which is encountered within existence, theology is not saying that the existential analysis of death is "false". The man of faith still experiences his limitation in death; but death loses its power for him in that he sees that death means an

"either/or" for man in the sense of judgement and grace. "Thus, theology recognizes the intimate connection between death and the revelation of God," concludes Bultmann.²⁶ It understands that God encounters the natural man in death and the encounter with revelation means death for the natural man. It means that "love is an absolute surrender of the I and only as such 'overcomes' death".²⁷

Regarding faith's new understanding, Rudolf Bultmann asks, "What 'more', then does the man of faith know?" Exactly this, he replies, that revelation has encountered him, that he really lives, that he is "graced" and is really forgiven and always will be.²⁸ He knows that by faith his concrete life in work and in joy, in struggle and in pain is "newly qualified". He knows that through the event of revelation the events of his life are new in that they are valid and visible to Him.²⁹ Faith does receive a "clarification" of profane existence not visible to philosophy. This is such that existence appears as "always already graced". Indeed, philosophy can understand it in the formal sense, as one can understand the eye-opening experience of friendship, yet only faith understands (in the existentiell sense) profane existence as graced.³⁰

EVALUATION OF UNBELIEVING -- BELIEVING EXISTENCE

We have already encountered most of the issues that arise in this discussion of "unbelieving/believing" existence but a few further comments are in order. Rather than contemplating in the manner of Martin Luther this unbelieving knowledge as a knowledge of God in his attributes, e.g. as omnipotence and eternity, Rudolf Bultmann envisages this knowledge as a knowledge of being claimed by an enigmatic, infinite power.³¹ Nevertheless, Rudolf Bultmann's reasoning is patterned after Martin Luther's "theology of the cross" (theologia crucis). For to Martin Luther, like Rudolf Bultmann after him, the true, proper knowledge of God (his "backside") is only disclosed to man in the cross of Christ.³²

Traditional Catholic and many classical Protestant thinkers would agree that philosophy and theology share a common interest in man; yet, some would maintain that God is the true object of theology. Karl Barth sharply dissents from Rudolf Bultmann and goes so far as to argue that philosophy has an understanding of Christian theology's object, God in Jesus Christ.

In advancing his thesis that theology arises out of a philosophical pre-understanding, Rudolf Bultmann again assumes that the existential-ontological philosophy provides the accurate analysis of man's existence as it is and that existential, dialectical theology which arises from it is Scriptural, New Testament theology. One has firstly to be "converted" to this existential philosophical position in order for one to accept that existential theology arises out of philosophy. Indeed, the polemical undertone and prevailing assumption throughout Rudolf Bultmann's theology is that man prior to faith exists in sin because he views man from a misguided ontological framework which sees him as an object among other objects. Rudolf Bultmann's greater point is that theology can arise only out of "graced" human existence and cannot be conveyed in the discursive communication of a transcendent, personal God.

Rudolf Bultmann's distinction between philosophy's ontological understanding of faith and faith's existentiell understanding is a useful one. Here again are existentially expressed echoes of Martin Luther's distinction between a "general" knowledge of God and a "proper" knowledge of God.³³

Rudolf Bultmann believes he can concomitantly retain and keep Martin Heidegger's philosophy undiluted while superimposing the Gospel upon it. Martin Heidegger posits that the resolve to accept one's existence as Being-toward-death is authentic existence. In making this resolution, another possibility has been forgone. We may rightly assume that when a Heideggerian who does not have faith resolves to accept his Being-toward-death, then this resolution is not the decision of "faith" which resolves to accept Jesus as God's revelation. However, this Heideggerian resolution gives

a new self-understanding and authentic existence. Now this bestowing of a new self-understanding and new existence is exactly what the resolution of faith is reputed to offer man. If the acceptance of the proclamation is reputed to do what Heidegger's resolution to accept one's Being-toward-death does, why do we need both theology and philosophy? In assuming both an uncorrected existential-ontological philosophy and an existential theology, is not Rudolf Bultmann implying that man must achieve two new self-understandings? Why do we need two conversions when one would do?

However, if we are to view both philosophy and theology as vital to man's new existence and man must accept his Being-toward-death and the proclamation, wherein is the distinction in substance and practice between the two self-understandings? In other words, what is the difference between Heidegger's authentic existence and Rudolf Bultmann's "justification by faith" in regards to both the essential nature of the existentiell encounter and the spiritual, psychological and empirical life of man? Does the distinction in essence reside in no more than one being "claimed" by a proclamation? If the main distinction between the two is that in one case man must decide to accept death while in the other case he must resolve to accept Jesus Christ, but the practical and empirical, yes, the eternal ramifications of both are the same, then what is the compelling reason(s) for accepting theology's proclamation as mandatory and essential? According to Rudolf Bultmann, theology must be mandatory or else we would have to assume that man could achieve true existence without faith in the proclamation. Since theology is mandatory for genuine existence, then we must conclude that theology demands from or offers to man something more than simple acceptance of death. If this is so, then it is sound to deduce that only theology can give man what he needs to make right his existence. If theology makes philosophical existence right, then theology corrects philosophy.

One wonders if Martin Heidegger would agree with Rudolf Bultmann that the proclamation takes over death's function in philosophy. Indeed, Rudolf

Bultmann quite naturally would like it both ways: he does not want to condemn existential analysis of death as "false". That would be self-condemning. He is absolutely committed to existential analysis. In fact, we must conclude that faith alone in the proclamation is insufficient for "justification" and a new self-understanding without the existential pre-understanding. Nevertheless, one infers that he holds that existential analysis of death is not entirely "true" and adequate. The proclamation, in a sense, supersedes death's function. It makes death obsolescent because it does what Heideggerian death does and more -- it reveals God. Rudolf Bultmann's ultimate "reason" for asserting the absolute necessity of the acceptance of the proclamation boils down to this: this syntactical arrangement of words called the "proclamation" is incumbent upon man only because the words say so to man -- neither because they refer to an authoritative, personal (human or super-human) referent nor because they have any philosophical, scientific, logical, psychological, spiritual, or practical justification.

1. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding, pp. 318f: Cf. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 177f.
2. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 320.
3. Ibid., p. 316.
4. Ibid., pp. 322f.
5. Ibid., p. 323.
6. Ibid., p. 316.
7. Ibid., p. 327: Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 93f.
8. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 327; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 94f.
9. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 327.
10. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 96.
11. Ibid., p. 97.
12. Ibid.
13. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 327.
14. Ibid., p. 328.
15. Ibid.
16. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 105.
17. Ibid., pp. 101f.
18. Ibid., p. 100.
19. Bultmann, Faith and Understanding I, p. 329.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid., p. 330.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., pp. 330f.
26. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 109.
27. Ibid., p. 110.
28. Ibid., p. 100.
29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., pp. 101f.
31. Althaus, Martin Luther, p. 16.
32. Ibid., pp. 16-17; 25-28.
33. For Luther's distinction, see Ibid., p. 17.

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